

**A REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR THE ATTAH
IGALA'S PALACE IDAH, KOGI STATE:
AN ATTEMPT AT DOCUMENTING IGALA
TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE**

BY

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(B.Sc ARCH)

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Science in Architecture**

**DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE FACULTY OF
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY
ZARIA, NIGERIA**

DECEMBER, 2000

DECLARATION

I, Edegbo, Enoch Bobby of the Department of Architecture, Faculty of Environmental Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria hereby declare that this Thesis work has been an academic undertaking and a personal effort in pursuit of knowledge.

All quotations and information utilized and their sources have been duly acknowledged by means of references.



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DECEMBER, 2000

DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Edegbo, The Edegbo family, my uncle Mr. Lawrence Obaje whose collective efforts have made this Thesis a reality.

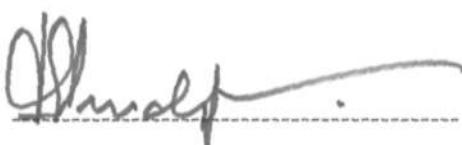
CERTIFICATION

This Thesis entitled " A REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR THE ATTAH IGALA'S PALACE IDAH, KOGI STATE " AN ATTEMPT AT DOCUMENTING IGALA TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE" by Enoch Bobby Edegbo meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master of Science in Architecture of Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.



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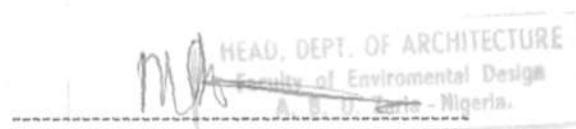
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ABSTRACT

A Palace is defined as a large grand house where a ruling king or queen officially lives. A palace is designed to serve not just the residential needs of the king or ruler but also serve as an administrative centre and for various social and religious/ritual ceremonies. The palace is also a symbol of authority in any given society, it serve as a source of pride, identity and grandeur. The palace expressed the spiritual and temporal powers of a ruler.

In the Igala kingdom, the Attah of Igala who is the traditional, spiritual and political ruler of the Igala people is considered divine and therefore held in high esteem. The present Attah Igala, Agabaidu Alhaji (Dr.) Aliyu Ochcja Obaje, CBE, CON, came to the throne in 1956 as the 26th Attah in the recorded history with Queen Ebculjonu as the first. Because of the Attah's status in the society, that is the political and spiritual ruler of the Igala race, and by extension, chairman, Kogi State Council of Traditional Rulers (first class ruler), the need to re-design his present palace to something befitting, cannot be over-emphasized.

This thesis seeks to propose a redevelopment for the Allah's palace. This is because the structures within the present palace site at Idah are dilapidated, inadequate and lacked proper planning pattern and to a larger extent, the palace does not reflect the planning pattern of the Igala race. The Allah's palace also does not reflect the identity of an Igala palace and lacked grandeur.

To correct these lapses listed above, this research attempts a documentation of

Igala traditional architecture, which covers; site selection, adoption of firm, site layout and planning pattern. Existing palaces were also visited and critically assessed to aid in the proposed redevelopment of the Attah's palace. The palaces visited are:

1) . The Oba of Benin's Palace, Benin, Edo State.

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2) . The Deji of Akure's Palace, Ondo State.

3) . The Emir of Zaria's Palace, Zaria, Kaduna State.

4) . The Emir of Kano's Palace, Kano State.

5) . The existing Attah Igala's Palace, Idah Kogi State.

The palaces listed above apart from the Attah's palace are reflections of the peoples' traditional style of architecture. That is the palaces demonstrates the planning pattern of the people they represent and reflects their various pattern of decorations in forms of reliefs and motifs. Also the palace buildings symbolise power and grandeur in terms of size and elaborate designs and decorations.

To this end, this thesis seeks to demonstrate the planning concept of Igala traditional compound layout in the new palace redevelopment proposal, in which the 'Alakpa' (common lounge) is centrally located within the compound with other sleeping quarters arranged around and facing the 'Atakpa. The researcher also borrows concepts from the Ejubejuilo mask (the Atlah's symbol of power and authority) and the Ikeleku Afiuma mask (one of the nine royal masks). These mask concepts are reflected in both the planning layout of the palace and on the elevations of the palace design.

The re-development proposal of the Attah's palace is being carried out so as to restore pride and identity to the Attah's palace in particular and

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the Igala race in general. The new palace which would be a modern design would be able to combine residential, administrative and various religious/ritual ceremonies effectively. The research also covers the historical background of the Attahship and the Igala people.

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1.0 CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Palaces to house the kings and his court were often built out of the same materials and in the same basic forms as ordinary houses, although palaces had thicker walls, more elaborate designs, and larger spaces. Some palaces were so large they resembled towns inside of towns. In what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the palaces of Kuba kings were mazelike in their complexity. They were typically situated on a mound in the centre of town so that the king could see the entire town from the palace. A palace had two main sections: One for the king and one for his wives and children. Mats woven with beautiful designs formed the palace walls. Because of their fragility and impermanence, these mats required constant maintenance. Architects kept plans and records of palace and towns layouts so that public buildings, streets, plazas, private compounds, and the palace itself could be re-created if the capital had to move.

In Nigeria, the Yoruba built more permanent palaces of sun-dried mud bricks. These palaces consisted of a series of courtyards, with each courtyard flanked by four rectangular units. Mud bricks formed the outer walls of each unit, and an overhanging roof shaded a veranda on the courtyard side. At the entrance to every Yoruba palace was a set of double wooden doors, intricately carved with abstract designs and images of human and animal figures.

The Olowo's Palace in Owo, southeastern Nigeria, had as many as 100 courtyards. Each courtyard had a specific function and was dedicated to a particular deity. The largest said to have been twice the size of a football field, was used for public assemblies and festivals. Some courtyards were paved with quartz pebbles or

broken pottery. Pillars supporting the king mounted on a horse or shown with his senior wife. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopaedia Deluxe 2000).

The Attah Igala's palace (Efosc) from time immemorial at Idah is situated near the top of the Niger. The palace like any other palace is divided into various sections and courtyards: The Attahs residence, the women quarters, the workers and servants quarters, the ceremonial ground, the administrative wing among others.

The structures housing these functions mentioned above are scattered within the enclosure of the palace walls, or fence without coherent planning pattern in terms of buildings and their relative functions. The ceremonial ground is used to mark festivals, ceremonies like the installation of a new Attah or a new chief and any other public assembly within the palace.

All the structures mentioned above in the palace are either too old and are in the state of collapse or too small to accommodate the function they are meant to accommodate. Hence the need for a re-development proposal for new structures that will adequately meet the users requirements and symbolize power, eminence and grandeur of the Attah being the traditional, spiritual and political ruler of the Igala race.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT:

In the course of this research, the major problem the author identified is the lack of a coherent architectural documentation both in terms of quality and quantity of information available on the subject matter. It is believed that this major factor is responsible for the following:

- (i) Lack of a befitting accommodation for the Attah and his family members, because the present structures within the palace walls are

fast decaying and do not portray the importance in the person of the

Attah who is the spiritual, traditional and political ruler of the Igalias,

- (ii) Infrastructures in terms of office accommodation, residential accommodation, recreational facilities are either inadequate or non-existent,
- (iii) An absence of a coherent planning pattern in terms of buildings and their relative functions within the palace walls,
- (iv) Traditional Architecture of the Igalias which is the cultural expression of the people since it reflects the physical, technological, cultural, political and socio-economic conditions of the people, is being threatened by the universalising force of modern architecture.

1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

This research attempts a documentation of Igala traditional architecture, in order not to loose track of its original architectural composition due to the alarming rate of influence of modern architecture. This is in aid of making a re-development proposal of the Attahs' palace, one befitting his status as the custodian of the Igala tradition and culture, traditional ruler of the Igala race and the Chairman Kogi State Council of Traditional Rulers.

This over all aim translates to set objectives among which are:

- (i) A documentation of the various building materials available to the Igala people,
- (ii) A documentation of the building procedures starting with site selection and preparation, the adoption of building forms e.t.c,

- (iii) A re-design of the Attah's palace to befit his esteemed status,
- (iv) To weigh to what extent immigrants and modern trends in architecture has influenced Igala traditional architecture.
- (v) A documentation of Igala traditional values and norms shall be attempted.

1.3 METHODOLOGY:

Data for this research has been collected and analysed from two (2) broad sources:

- (i) Primary sources,
- (ii) Secondary sources.

(i) Primary sources:

(a) Interviews

The relevance of interviews to any kind of research cannot be over emphasised. To this end, interviews have been conducted on several heads of households, women, children and local builders. At the Attah's palace, the Attah himself, the secretary to the Igala traditional council, some palace workers, guards and chiefs have been interviewed. Some opinion leaders in Igala land have been interviewed too. The response from this interview will ultimately guide the researcher in this work.

(b) Case studies:

Case studies were carried out with particular attention to the site, spatial organisation and their relationship. Also additional information would be sourced from books, Journals, encyclopaedia etc.

For this research, a comparison and contrasting will be made of the Igala traditional architecture with that of the Benin, Jukun and the Yoruba Kingdoms, and as well as any other tribe that the Igalias have been in contact with.

The Oba of Benin's palace, Akure and some villages in Ondo and Ekiti States have been visited. The Attahs palace at Idah has been critically assessed also.

(c) Observations:

A lot of similarities have been observed in the traditional architecture of the various groups mentioned above compared with the Igala traditional architecture, in terms of building materials and site layout.

(ii) Secondary Sources:

Secondary sources of data collection, which has been extensively exploited, include: published Journals Books, encyclopaedia, Government reports and proposals unpublished Terminal exerts and thesis among others. From the books consulted so far, useful information have been gathered that will ultimately guide in the successful execution of this research.

1.5 MOTIVATIONS AND JUSTIFICATION

The driving force behind this thesis is to contribute a reasonable quota to the development of Igalaland from all that has been learnt in the School of Architecture Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. In addition to this is the need to document Igala traditional architecture for the present and future generations of Igalias to learn from.

1.5.1 Justification:

A proper architecture is meant to cater for the comfort, status, flexibility, adequate accommodation and aesthetically pleasing environment. The present structures in the Attahs palace are devoid of the attributes listed above. Among others:

- (i) The site is not properly planned,
- (ii) The buildings are old and small in sizes, therefore cannot adequately accommodate most of the functions they are meant to serve,
- (iii) The use of most of the spaces appeared to be an after thought, thereby creating chaos and lack of piracy in most cases,
- (iv) The overall palace design does not portray the importance and leadership role of the Attah among his people and as the Chairman Kogi State Council of Traditional Rulers.

An urgent and necessary need to correct these lapses forms the justification for the a re-development proposal of the Attahs palace, more so the Kogi State government is proposing giving the Attah a befitting palace on the same site of the present palace that is “*Ologbo Attah*” or ‘*Efose*’. This will be done concurrently with the documentation of the Igala traditional architecture.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS:

In an attempt to document Igala traditional architecture as well as proposing a redevelopment for the Attahs palace, the scope of this work would be to sample some villages in Igalaland to see the type of architectural compositions that are most consisted and to document them as the traditional architecture of the Igalias. Building types to be documented include; Religious buildings, Residential Buildings and Public buildings. While for the Attah’s palace, architectural requirement of a modern

palace design would be evolved still retaining some Monumental buildings within the site of the palace. These shall include:

- a. The Attah's residence
- b. The wives and children quarters
- c. Administrative block
- d. The Attah's palace
- e. Guest wing
- f. Gate houses
- g. Museum
- h. Civic or ceremony ground
- i. Servants quarters
- j. Generator house
- k. Parking lots
- l. Landscaping of the whole complex
- m. Car garages among others.

1.6.1 Limitations

The limitations of this thesis work is mainly that of financial constraint and inadequate time required to carry out detailed and extensive work on the subject matter. Another limitation is that of restrictions in gaining access to some areas of the palace visited including the Attahs palace.

Lack of a coherent and inadequate reference material on the subject matter, is another limiting factor

1.7 ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE.

The architectural significance of this research is in the proper planning of the palace, so that space is flexible and reflects user requirements in terms of status, eminence and symbolism of power and grandeur.

This work will also serve as a reference material for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The origin of the Igala nation would be highlighted in this chapter of literature review. Also to be highlighted include: The geographical location of the present day Igalaland, the cultural festivals in Igalaland, the Socio-economic activities and modern developments in Igalaland.

2.1 ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF IGALALAND:

Many legends regarding the origin of the Igalas exist. Each of these legends have some elements of truth in them though one cannot see the Igalas as migrating from different places at a time.

The Attah of Igala once told visiting staff and students of Holy Rosary College, Idah (12/11/70) that the Igalas came from Ethiopia and he supported this, by referring to a tribe of Pegle called 'Gala' in Ethiopia.

The Igalas were also thought to be of Jukun Origin while another think they are of Fulani extraction. The most definite historical statement that can be made about the Igala is that they had a common origin with the Yoruba and that the separation took place long enough ago to allow for their fairly considerable linguistic differences.

Crowther quotes two different traditions of origin. According to the first, the King of Yoruba made a journey to Raba, the old Nupe Capital on the Niger, and asked the Attah to indicate a suitable place for him to settle. The Attah accordingly took a canoe and dropped down the river till he came to Idah where the Akpoto, who lived

there, allowed the Yoruba King to stay. The Attah had great influence and precedence over the Akpoto. (Crowther, 1855, P.65).

Crowther was told at Idah by a Chief related on his mother's side to the Akpoto that the country had belonged originally to the Akpoto and that the King was named Igala. The first Attah was a hunter by profession who came from a tribe named Ado, to the west of the Nigeria. He ingratiated himself with Igala by gifts of big game and then, when a quarrel arose, drove out Igala and became King himself. Crowther was also told that the Akpoto were now subject to the Attah, and that their language was the same. The chief said, moreover, that the Attah of Igala and the Kings of Nupe and Aboh (in Ibo country) all came from Ado; Crowther identified several places called Ado in or near Yoruba country, one of which is Benin.

G.T. Mott, a former District officer in Kabba province, in an unpublished report, argues that the origin of the Igala Kingship was not Jukun but Bini. Beyond a certain geographical plausibility he can point to the facts that the famous brass mask worn by the Attah is most probably of Benin workmanship, that the wearing of Beads on the wrist as a symbol of Chieftainship is common to Benin and Igala, and that in both places, the death of the king was kept secret for as long as one to three years. The last custom is also found more widely among, e.g., the northern Idoma and in the Worku district of Egede.

As various writers have pointed out, it is by no means easy to pursue these investigations further at Idah. The Attah and his immediate entourage simply say that his ancestor was one Agenapoje, "who landed on a rock near Idah, being sent from the gods".

Nevertheless, even if we should admit a Jukun or Bini origin for the ruling group, we have contributed little to the explanation of the phenomena. Apart from the fact that the connections of Igala with Yoruba are far from having been explored, it is by now obvious that very considerable development of political institutions has taken place at Idah itself, although not indeed in isolation from outside influences.

The earliest European explorers and travellers found the king of Idah in control of the whole east bank of the Niger from Adamugu, at the edge of Ibo country, to above Koton Karfe. The two-Igbira kingdoms of Koton Karfe and Funda (Panda) were tributary to him, although the Fulani were beginning to make in roads. Slave raiding and slave trading had for long been a regular part of the economy and, indeed, one of the major objects of the early expeditions was the attempt to stop these activities at their source. The early explorers, however, were witnesses to a sharp transformation of the slaving pattern, which resulted from the Fulani conquests.

When Laird visited Panda in 1833, he was told that it had once been much more important centre of trade, "a sort of entrepot where Arabs and Felatahs (Fula) exchanged European goods for slaves". What seems to have happened is that with the extension of the Fulani Empire and the coming of Fulani raids in force into this region, the trade by which the town had prospered became increasingly difficult.

At the time of the Laird and Oldfield expedition there were, in addition to Idah, two important Igala markets on the left bank of the Niger: Adamugu on the northern tip of an island about fifteen miles south of Idah, and Ikiri or Boquch, about 24 river miles above Idah. Both were important centres of the slave trade. The Landers, in 1830, met both Nupe and Bonny (Niger Delta) slave traders at Adamugu. It was also a centre for the ivory trade, and to this day there are elephants in the

riverain marshes from this region south to Onitsha. In the time of the first expeditions, Adamugu was under a chief by the name of Abokko, who also controlled one of the wards of Idah, was the principal contact man for the Europeans, and was even then quarrelling with the Attah. After Abokko's death Adamugu was abandoned, apparently as a result of factional quarrels. Crowther reports that by 1854 these quarrels had become very serious and had resulted in a great decline in the population of Idah since his first visit in 1841. The Abokko party had left Idah and had settled up and down the Niger from Ibo country to the confluence. They controlled most of the trade and had forced the break-up of the great market at Ikiri. Trade at Idah had nearly ceased.

Clifford says of the period under discussion that the political functions of the king were greatly reduced. A plethora of titled office-holders came into being, the titles bearing few duties with them. The sons of the king's mother's kindred formed a corporate body guard, which, under the Attah Amocheje, at mid-century virtually took over the kingdom, causing great unrest. They and the titled officials kept the Attah increasingly isolated from the practical conduct of affairs, and he became more and more an inaccessible religious symbol. As such, however, his reputation went far beyond the effective political limits of Igala. From all over Idoma and from other places newly chosen chiefs, would make pilgrimages to Idah to be confirmed in office and to receive from the Attah the bead bracelet of office. The Attah was also called upon to arbitrate chieftaincy disputes. The cult of the Attah, it would appear, was a profitable one.

By 1854 the Fulani had become a really serious threat to the Igala. They had raided all the way down to the Delta along the west bank of the Niger, burning and

pillaging towns and taking large numbers of slaves. North of the Benue, the situation was even worse. In 1853 Panda was finally destroyed, and the Emirate of Nassarawa was founded. The districts along the Benue River became flooded with refugees. The Bassa-Nge came into the confluence region after 1840, many Igbira after the fall of Panda, the Bassa-Komo in 1860. The power of the Attah had weakened to such an extent that he was unable to keep the Basa-Komo from spreading out much farther than he had intended.

Closer European control of the Mediterranean, beginning with the collective demarche of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1819 against piracy in Tunisia and culminating in the French Conquest of Algeria, 1830-48, together with the wars with Morocco in 1844-60 and the British intervention in Tunisia beginning in 1855, closed the main outlet for Fulani slaves. It is worth considering the possibility that this, together with the general decline in the world market for slaves after 1850, deprived the Fulani of their principal motive and their principal source of weapons for their wars. It is often said that the tsetse fly prevented the Fulani from establishing themselves south of the Benue, by killing the horses on which they depended. The fly may indeed have played a part, but the early accounts tell of many more horses in Igala than one sees there today, and the tsetse fly population may no yet have been so heavily infected with sleeping sickness.

In the latter half of the 19th century, the Igala seem to have turned to river piracy, and the Royal Niger Company punished Idah on more than one occasion. The Igala and their neighbours were a constant source of trouble to early administrations, even after the raising of the British flag at Lokoja in 1900. In 1904, and for 30 years thereafter, a garrison of troops was stationed at Ankpa in eastern Igala. For a time the

boundary between the Northern provinces and the Eastern provinces passed through Igala in such a way as to cut Idah off from Northern Igala, but this was corrected after 1918.

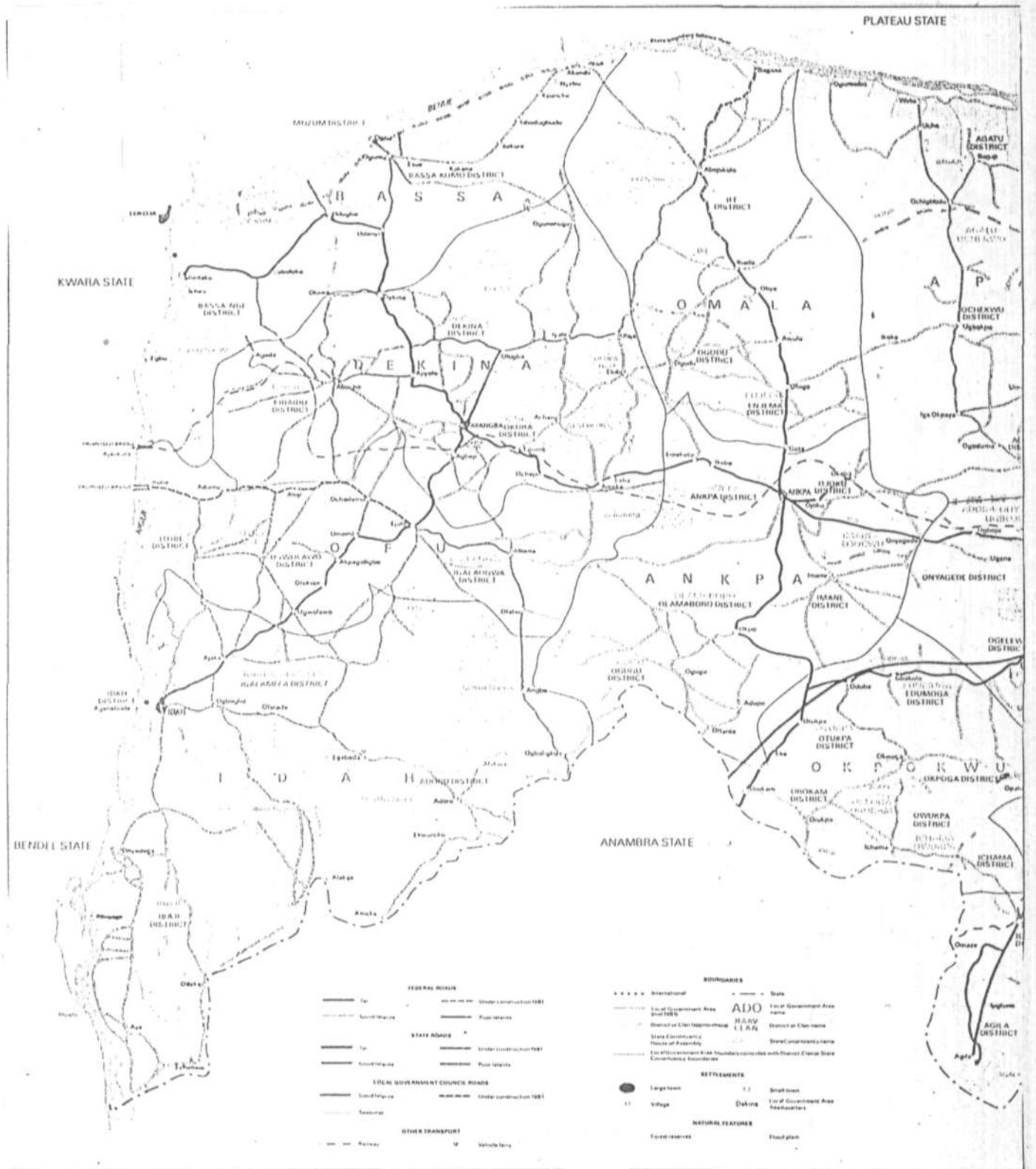
The effect of Government policy in modern times has been to strengthen the position of the Attah with respect to his officialdom and to encourage him to be more accessible. (Daryll, F. 1955)

2.2 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE PRESENT DAY IGALALAND:

The present day Igala land occupies the Eastern part of Kogi State. It covers an area of thirty seven thousand, one hundred and twenty square meters ($37,120m^2$) from the north to the south. It occupies two hundred and thirty two (232) km in length and one hundred and sixty (160) km in width along the east west directions. Igala land covers six (6) local government areas out of the sixteen (16) Local Government Areas of Kogi State and has a population of over two (2) million people by the 1991 Nigerian population census figures.

The area is bounded on the North by the Igbirra Konton (Plateau State) in the east, by the Igbos (Enugu State) in the Northeast, by the Idomas (Benue State) and in the west by the Benins (Edo State). (Akor, A.J. 1998)

Fig.2.2a. Map of Igalaland: (Source: Francois, N. 1985)



2.3 BASIC UNIT OF SETTLEMENT IN IGALA LAND:

The basic unit of settlements in Igala land is the hamlet, *aja*, forming a small self-contained community whose homesteads are traditionally clustered together and separated from those of neighbouring hamlets by tracts of intervening woodland or farmland. A group of hamlets sharing one farming area and other common facilities such as water, a main path or road, and groves of secondary forest, make up a village, *ewo*. Formerly hamlets were scattered through the area of a village and only loosely united by a network of interconnecting paths. But with the construction of modern roads, settlements tend to congregate around convenient points of access to the road system, and hamlets are increasingly becoming contiguous within the village. This development is paralleled by an increase in village solidarity, and by the emergence of new or intensified forms of village co-operatives. But the hamlet remains the basic unit of social life and village organization is still dominated by the traditional pattern of relations between hamlets. The contrast between social and spatial distance in village relationships is often extremely marked even in the more compact type of settlement and in general the communal life of the village is poorly developed by comparison with the wealth of ceremonial, ritual, and social activities that occur at hamlet level.

In a typical hamlet the compound of the group founder dominates the other homesteads by its size and central position, and to some extent the entire network of paths and buildings that make up the hamlet is co-ordinated topographically by the main axes of this primary homestead. The high-ridged roof of the reception house, *atakpa*, that fronts this central compound is visible from most points of the hamlet,

and forms an important symbol of the groups' spatial and social identity. It is in this hut that visitors are received formally by the head of the settlement and here also that any major disputes or other issues affecting all members of the group are discussed and settled. The *atakpa* and its site are also symbols of the ritual identity of the group and of the spiritual welfare of the whole community. Near the entrance to the *atakpa*, on the main path used by persons entering the hamlet, stand small shelters that house various protective medicines, *Ode*, and spirit shrines, *Unyi-ebo*. And the *atakpa* itself guards an inner courtyard, *anuku*, whose all encloses domestic buildings and a collection of ancestor shrines, *Uyi ibegwu*, graves, *Ojinoji*, and protective charms, *ode*.

Each hamlet is connected with the public road, and so with the outside world, by a long, straight, and well-maintained entrance path, *ojikpologu*, which debauches into the heart of the settlement opposite the *atakpa*, of its founder. For ritual, ceremonial, and some political purposes the Igala disregard the existence of the numerous minor back ways, *Okpa ubi Oko*, that fan out from the settlement and think of the hamlet as having only one entrance and exit. This cul-de-sac layout symbolizes the separation of the hamlet from the rest of the village and creates a physically self-contained community. It also has a defensive purpose, advertising the coming of strangers before they reach the *atakpa*, and giving the elders of the hamlet a chance to withdraw if they do not wish to encounter them at once. In line with this purpose, compounds are often built with a grinding house *Odo Okuta* in front of the *atakpa* so that the women and children, who spend much of their time working there, can be aware of people entering and leaving the hamlet.

Hamlets that form the centres of clan segments or lineages may possess an additional ancestral shrine in the form of a separate grove, *an'okula*. In plan this grove constitutes a symbolic model of the hamlet itself, being a circular clearing with a tree in the centre at whose feet pots or pot necks are sunk into the ground to receive offerings to the groups ancestors. The grove has its own *ojikpologu* which often continues the line of the main entrance to the hamlet itself in such a way that the grove and the hamlet are like mirror images of one another, separated by the main highway. (Boston, 1968)

2.4 CULTURAL FEATURES IN IGALALAND:

There is no society without culture. Even among the Europeans there are cultures. But this is more pronounced among the Africans. Culture is the way of life, customs, beliefs of the people living in a particular area. This could vary based on geographical location of individuals, it could be ways of eating, dressing, religion, e.t.c.

According to Ezenwu (1985) an educationist, culture is pattern of learned behaviour, whose component elements are shared and transmitted by members of a particular society. Also Adedoyin (1987) elaborated that culture is made up of things created or made by man, which we can see and touch like buildings, cloths, shoes, and chain in addition to hoes, food and constitution that are material culture. Bates and Julian (1975) saw culture as everything that people have learned and preserved from their past collective experience. It is therefore shared and passed on from one generation to another.

Neighbouring peoples have had an influence on Igala art and culture through the course of history. The primary influence is that of indigenous population, such as the Akpoto and the Igala mela. But Igala has also been in touch with the Yoruba. This is proven by linguistic research. The way social and political institutions function (the four branches of the royal family assume kingship in turn) reminds us of what was happening in the Ife Kingdom in the XIIITH – XIVTH centuries. Contacts of the Igala with Edo speaking peoples, especially with the Benin Kingdom in the first decades of the XVIth Century, have had a definite influence on their culture. The pectoral mask *Ejubecjailo*, Symbol of power, constitutes a precious indication in dating this Benin influence. There are still other signs: the *akpa Ayagba* cast brass stool, the wrought iron sceptres which are used in the sanctuaries devoted to the gods of medicine. There is also the historical war of 1517, which opposed the Igala and the Benin Kingdom. Mention should also be made of Queen Amina from Zaria with her Hausa and Nupe attendants. Finally the close ties between the Igala and the Idoma, their eastern neighbours, complete this interaction of adjoining cultures.

In the XVITH century, the Igala are said to have paid tribute to the Jukun of Wukari. Cultural traits of that period still subsist: for example certain masks and regalia, among which the ankle-ring the king wears in certain ceremonies. There existed definite agricultural acquisitions such as the sweet potatoes; also there may have been influences in the production of bronze and brass objects.

The reign of king Ayagba, son of Idoko, at the end of the XVITH century, has been crucial for Igala history. The Igala Mela were much impressed by his ability to settle disputes (*Idah=Ida,,* it cuts, or ends). They also admired the beauty of his insignia. All consider him as the actual founding father of Igala Kingdom. The

prince Ayegba was put on the throne with the agreement of the Achadu clan and its chief Omeppa. He then refused to pay tribute to the Jukun. A quick reaction followed, and a panic-stricken Idah expected the attack of Jukun soldiers. A mysterious diviner advised the Attah to offer what was most dearest to him: his own daughter. The Attah was reluctant, but Princess Inikpi, an African Iphigenia, took upon herself to be buried alive. The Jukun lost the battle, and were chased out of the kingdom, at about twenty kilometres west of Oturkpo, near the Ochekwu River, since then, princess Inikpi has been worshipped like a goddess. Today, in Idah, a monument has been erected at the very place of her sacrifice that is at the riverside entrance of Ega market. Each year, at the end of the Ocho festival, the Attah visits the tomb of Inikpi, with his councillors, court officials and royal marks, with offerings.

Without describing in details the many ceremonies of the royal court, it can be said that the sovereign was directly or indirectly responsible for all religious acts, which secured the well being of the whole population. In this sense, he is also a priest-king, as those, mutatis mutandis, of the Igbo, in the Ife and Benin Kingdoms, as well as amongst the Jukun.

The festivals constituted focus of the life of the Igala people and of their sovereign. It was the extra ordinary yearly event in the life of the realm. Royal authority was reinforced and its prestige increased through politico-ritual ceremonies in which the masks played an important role. Everything contributes to remind us of the essential role of the Attah, as depository of the well being of his people, which he incarnates. In the rites, God intervenes in favour of the people, through the person of the king. The people themselves recover their vitality; avert fatality and disasters, which threatens their daily lives.

These annual festivals celebrations renew the religious power of the Attah. In Idah, there existed and still exist nine (9) royal masks; they all serve, each in it's own way, the same ideological purpose: to reinforce the Attah's royal power. Each of the royal masks has its own function. The Attah's private councillors representing a specific clan keep it.

Below is the list of the nine royal masks:

i. The Ekwe mask: This dates back to the origins of the kingdom; the Attah Ayagba could have established it. The first among the royal masks, it is worshipped like a god.

Ekwe is draped from head to foot in an ample cloth out of which appear the mouth and the crest-shaped nose, tubular eyes and the raphia fringe of the coat; at the bottom edge of the robe, a series of cast bronze bells of oval section are sewn; a large lozenge with triangles and helicoidal lines decorate the umbilical zone. Other 'appliqué work' is attached to the robe: circles with the same helicoidal pattern, for instance just under the mouth, decorated with triangles. One should also note two opposed lizards around a circle. The mask sanctifies and protects the royal dynasty at each of its appearance, especially at the time of a hunt. The clan Enefola is in charge of it.

ii The Agbanabo mask: This also originates from the first Igala sovereign, Ayagba. Like the Ekwe mask, Agbanabo is said to posses a huge healing power. It is feared not only by women and children, but also by all men not initiated in the Agbanabo masquerade cult.

The head, a kind of baboon muzzle, consists in a long stretched surface, from the centre of which grossly protrudes the nasal ridge. Two small eye openings are

emphasized by white chalk giving stylised form to the orbital cavities. The hair dress is made up of a thick, sleek cap covered with resin and decorated with little red and black seeds. The mask is covered with a coarse material, which covers the carrier.

During the Ocho festival, Agbanabo accompanies Ekwe and helps in forcing a way for the Attah's horses to open a passage to the Palace. It also intervenes in the Egwu and Ayegba festivals.



Plate 2.4a.Royal Ekwe mask

(Source: Francois, N. 1985)



Plate 2.4b.Royal Agbanabo mask.

iii The Ochochono mask: Is the most recent of the royal masks. Tradition's version is that the mask had been abandoned in Igala country by Jukun-warriors from Wukari during the war against the Igala. The mask also protects the kingship. It has a particular dance step. Its function is to open the royal person against plots and coups d'etat, and, in a wider sense, to protect the city of Idah particularly when the Attah visits the hut where the mask is kept before the Ocho festival.

iv The Inyelekwe mask: This mask could have also originated from the Jukun. It performs for three days in the Ocho festival. Its function is to escort the Attah until the end of the ceremonies. This oval, stretched mask is characterized by a mouth open almost from ear to ear in a voluminous protruding spiral covered with abruss seeds, with a straight, slightly flat nose and almond-shaped eye openings. The fore head, the ears and the skull-cap are covered with surfaces in relief decorated with ornamental red and black seeds. The body is wrapped in strips of material, which completely hide the officiant.



Plate 2.4c.Picture of Royal Inyelekwe mask

v The Epe mask: The name of this mask is that of a festival which takes place eight days before the Ocho festival. It is said to possess healing powers, but in return, it requires sacrifices: hens, goats, colanuts: its dance is exclusively dedicated to the Attah, although the crowd may sometimes catch a glimpse of it. It is one of the best-decorated masks.

It is a helmet mask, around 35 centimetres high, carved in wood with a bluish glitter. It has oval eye openings; a protruding line reaching down from the forehead unto the nose, with well-designed nostrils. A feather of the uloko bird is fixed in the right ear. Four rows of tattooing join the eye to the ear. The cap-shaped hair style protrudes showing, on both sides, cleared circular surfaces and is completely covered with red abruss seeds.

Epe also pays tribute to Ekwe, and heals with his right hand all those he meets on his way. The Attah is thus honouring himself through the mask. Epe also serves to support the royal crown. Below is the Royal Epe mask.



Plate 2.4d. Royal Epe mask.

vi The Ichawula mask: Women prefer this mask. Like the preceding ones it belongs to a masquerade inherited from the Attah Ayegba. It performs on the third of the five days preceding the Ocho festival. It is a helmet mask, characterized by its hairdress composed of a central chignon marked with parallel grooves. Above the round ears, there are two protruding half-circles surrounding a central core covered with red abruss seeds. Two very drawn out eyes and a straight nasal plane. On each side of a small, oval mouth, the cheeks show the typical Ichawula scarification. White dye covers the eyebrows, nose, mouth and ears, but the mask itself is darkish.



Plate 2.4e.Picture of the Royal Ichawula mask (Source: Francois, N. 1995)

vii The Ablifada mask: Is the incarnation of Ekwe's son and as such inspires respect. Its only function is to accompany Ekwe everywhere on Ocho day. It also performs on the ninth day before the opening of Ocho festival. Those who are Ekwe initiates are automatically Ablifada initiates. The latter posses neither its own dance nor its own song. According to Chike Dike, the connection between the two masks reflects the

ties existing between the Enefola clan (for Ekwe) and the Okegga Kini clan (for Ablifada).

viii The Odumado mask; is also one of the nine (9) main supporting masks of Attah's royal authority. It performs on the fifth day of the Ocho festival and precedes the king back to his palace after Ocho's festivities.

It is a well-known cylinder-shaped helmet mask covered with dark and black dye. The whole face is marked by vertical, parallel grooves. The crescent-shaped open eyes are on both sides of a straight nose, with well-designed wings. The mouth is elongated with protruding lips. The auricles are round. Wide protruding lines, drawn from the lips to the temples, trace the face limits; they are typical of Odumado, as it is the case with the cap-shaped, thick hairstyle, which is covered by epu red seeds. A white dye covers the oblique scarification, the orbital cavities and the nose. The body itself is covered with strips of material. Like Ichawula, Odumado carries a stick for walking.



Plate 2.4f.Picture of Royal Odumado mask(Source: Francois, N. 1985)

ix The Ikeleku ahuma mask: Like Ekwe clearly differs from the others, even if it assumes the same ritual function, i.e. the tribute to Attah, it is the master of Ekwe dances. It is feared and respected; it appears in all royal festivals. But Ikeleku Ahuma is not strictly a mask. It is rather a crown made of brass plates, decorated with interlacing geometrical designs and crossing liens. Ikeleku Ahuma wears a garment of a material richly decorated with flowers and abstract designs with sewed on cowries. It carries the *itali* (whip) staff to scatter the crowed on Ocho day.

The dance of Ikeleku Ahuma is slow, highly dignified, following the rhythm of the only *Igba* drum. The mask receives offerings, colanuts, cocks or wine, in order to secure the Attah's life and that of the mask itself. The African way of wishing long life.

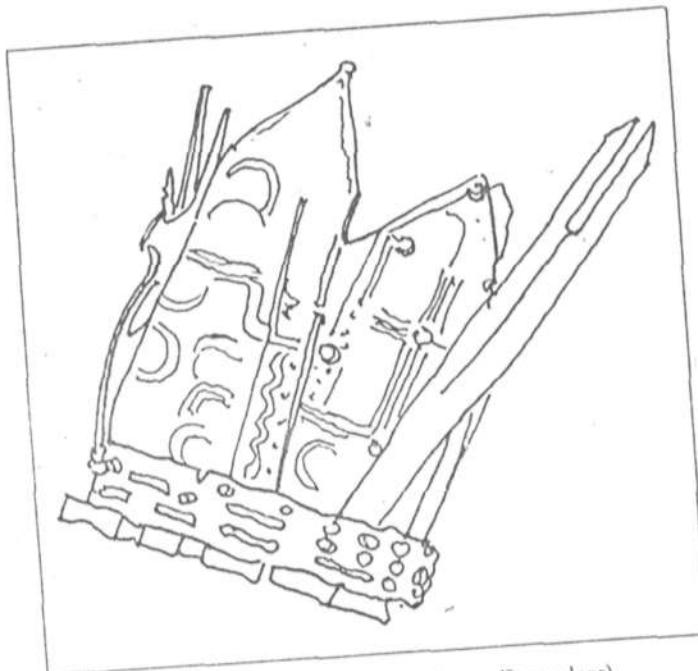


plate 2-AK Ikeleku Ahuma mask (drawing M. van Doorselaer).



Plate 2.4g. The monument of Princess Inipki, the legendary daughter of the great Attah Igala – Ayagba Oma Idoko, who voluntarily agreed to be buried alive to save the Igala Kingdom in 1515 AD. The monument at her tomb, which is a shrine, stands at the riverside entrance of Ega market at Idah.
(Source: Agamah, D.A.)

Festivals are periods of happiness, convergence of clansmen and kinsmen, friends, relatives and well wishers from within and outside Igala land. The festivals are celebrated all over Igala land in various forms, like in funerals, naming, new yam festivals, and so on, apart from the central masquerades festivals in the Attah's palace or in Idah the capital.

One thing is imperative during festivals; there is a ray of sober reflections, counting on the past and present achievements and defeats by projecting certain developmental programmes for the future. Also important is the fact that culture is conspicuously displayed with masquerades of different sizes and shapes in colourful and magnificent costumes.

The fact that every system of belief whether African tradition, Christianity or Islamic have significance in every society, the contributions of traditional festivals to the socio-political development of Igala land cannot be over-emphasized. It creates unity and harmony among the Igalas. Tradition is maintained and recognized. It encourages inter-village marriage. It co-ordinates and harmonizes friendship. It promotes social and cultural integration and lastly, it eliminates inter village conflicts in Igala land as an entity. (Akolor, A.J. 2000)

2.5 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES:

The climate and vegetation of this area (Igalaland) favour agriculture and the people have made quite an appreciable progress to make the area one of the food baskets of Nigeria. Food crops commonly produced include yam, cassava, rice,

maize, guineacorn and benniseed, while cocoa, coffee, cashew, rice and oil palm are the cash crops grown in commercial quantities.

Recently, many industries have sprung up all over Igaland providing job opportunities for young Igala men and women. Industries such as oil palm processing, Saw mills, which exploits the forest reserves mostly converting logs into timber for construction and furniture, livestock production in Igaland also is of commercial scale as livestock like sheep, goats and poultry are produced for local consumption and export to neighbouring states.

Like most African communities, the Igala people are hard working and they embark also on so many small scale industries such as black smiths, goldsmith, brewing of local beer (Oburukutu), basket making, carpentry job, building, local welding, weaving, dying and trading.

With the advent of education and technology, Many Igala sons and daughters are now quite educated and are involved in all aspects of the Nigerian Economy and in the civil service as there are trained professors in various fields, Architects, Engineers, Doctors, Economists, Lawyers, Planners, Surveyors, Politicians among several others.

Igala land presently enjoys basic amenities like electricity, water supply, telephone services, good schools from kindergarten to tertiary institutions, good road networks, various industries both small and large scale, good basic accommodation (modern and well designed buildings), and so on. All these points to the fact that Igala land and people are dynamic in nature and tend to move with the world in its dynamism and this fact is reflected in all facets of the Igala people and that includes their architecture.

CHAPTER THREE

THE INSTITUTION OF THE ATTAH IGALA

This chapter will be devoted to the origin of the Attah Igala, the symbolism of Kingship in Igala land, the Attah's councillors and other title holders and their duties, the Achadu and the Kingmakers and finally Accession to the Throne of the Attah. This is to give an insight to the throne of the Attah, its importance politically and spiritually to the Igala nation.

3.1 THE ORIGIN OF THE ATTAH OF IGALA:

There are many legends as to the origin of the Royal Clan and the title the Attah of Igala. Some of these legends are summarised below:

The mythical character of the early period of the Igala Kingship is reflected in uncertainty about the genealogical status of the first royal ancestors. Genealogically, the ancestors of the royal clan is the fifth in line of descent, and there are four Attah's, including one woman, before Ayagba Om' Idoko, to whom most branches of the royal clan trace their descent. Ayagba's forbears are said to be: Abutu Eje, Agenapoje, Ebelejonu and Idoko.

Idoko immediately precedes Ayagba, and is fixed in this position by the fact that Ayagba's name is invariably given as Ayagba Omi Idoko (son of Idoko). But the relationship of the other three ancestors is uncertain, in the sense that there are different versions of their connection, amounting virtually to a complete series of variations on the genealogical positions of these three names. These early ancestors are both structurally and historically protodynastic, they do not belong to the main

pedigree of the ruling class and they also represent the different order of time. Ayagba and his father are transitional figures, mythological with regard to their achievements and the compression of historical events, and historical in the sense that they mediate between the period of creation and the later period of development in which events occur within the dimension of historical time.

The protodynastic ancestors tend to be represented in kingship ritual by a single figure or by a single symbolic cult object. In Ojaina, the royal burial ground at Idah, there are only twenty-two royal graves, and the grave of Ebelejonu is symbolically equivalent to the graves of Agenapoje, Abutu Eje, and Idoko, who are not represented by individual graves. There is, similarly, a single ritual staff, *Otutubatu*, which represents all the protodynastic ancestors collectively in the royal ancestor cult; when sacrifices are made their names are not called individually as are those of the dynastic kings, but their presence is manifest in the ritual staff, which is placed to one side of the other ancestral staffs and first receives offerings. (Boston, J. S. 1968).

3.2 THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY:

The myths that describe the protodynastic epoch place vents in a sequence that is governed by rules of local development rather than by objective historical conventions. There are three principal stages which in a sense lead on from one another but nevertheless fit together awkwardly in a historical sequence because of the omission of intervening stages and also because the historical details given in the legend are specific to each phase and do not always relate exactly to the details of the other phases.

The first phase of Igala protodynastic myth is contained in different legends describing the transfer of sovereignty from the autochthonous population to an immigrant group of royal or noble descent. These legends vary with regard to the tribe or centre to which they attribute the origin of the immigrants. But they coincide in stating that the immigrant founder of the Igala royal house was himself of royal origin, the scion of an older and senior royal line in another kingdom. The migration to and arrival in Igala may be described in detail, with supporting circumstantial evidence of a geographical character. The migration from Wukari is a good instance of this, and there is a counterpart, making a different attribution, in the legend of Benin origin that forms part of the inner tradition of the royal house. But this migration can also be represented symbolically, and there is an important myth of totemic identity between the royal clan and the leopard, which avoids the difficulties of historical attribution by attributing the foundation of the royal clan to a union between an anthropomorphic leopard and a woman of the autochthonous groups. This myth still says that, the royal baby was exposed by its mother and then found and fostered by a leopard until it became old enough to re-enter human society. The full text of the royal version of the leopard myth, is as follows:

"The first rulers had a daughter who went daily from the capital to collect firewood in the grove that is now called Ojaina. As she was visiting this grove she met a leopard there that took the form of a young man. He made advances to her and was accepted, so the young girl was going daily to meet her husband in the bush. He killed game for her and made presents of bush cow and other animals to her parents who began to be curious about the mysterious husband and asked repeatedly to see him. When the girl told him of this the leopard promised to appear and fixed a time at

which he would show himself to his in-laws. But when the leopard came out of the bush, the girl's parents ran away in terror. So the leopard ran and hid himself again in the hick bush at Ojaina and went into the ground there. His wife later delivered a child, Abutu Eje, who was the founder of the royal clan. The Ojaina grove is the spiritual centre of the royal clan and forms the last resting place of all dead Attahs that is the Royal burial ground.

The Salutation "Agabaidu" (testifies to this fact) . (Boston, J.S. 1968).

3.3 THE SYMBOLISM OF KINGSHIP IN IGALA LAND:

The symbolism of kingship in Igalaland falls naturally in to two major divisions centering on the King's role as clan head and on his position as head of a centralised system of territorial administration. On the one hand his relation towards the royal ancestors, whose cult is one of the central themes of the national religion, defines the Attah's ritual status. On the other hand he is the ultimate custodian of the national land shrine, *erane*, which symbolizes the moral and spiritual welfare of the Igala as members of the same political community. The polarity of this ritual dichotomy appears in the existence of two major royal festivals, one oriented towards the Attah's ancestors and the other towards the land shrine and activities associated with the communal use of the land. On the day of the Attah's installation, similarly, there are two major stages, one in which the king halts at the boundary of the royal burial ground, Ojaina, where the king is invested, and another at the site of the land shrine, where the king delays again to receive the homage of the kingmakers and the other traditional officers of the state. The ritual objects used by the Attah in the palace likewise falls into two distinct classes, expressing the dichotomy of the Attah's ritual

functions. Nevertheless, although there is an intellectual separation in Igala culture between these aspects of kingship which justifies dividing them for description and analysis, it must be emphasized that the two are complementary and that the reality of kingship is represented more accurately by talking of their fusion and interpretation than by thinking of them as distinct. It is the fusion and interaction of these two sets of ideas, which largely accounts for the ceremonial aspects of the kingship: the regalia and insignia of office represent the undivided aspect of kingship and symbolize the merging of different ritual and political capacities in the image of a single institution.

3.4 THE ATTAH'S COUNCILLORS:

Within the reigning lineage the body of royal councillors represented both the Attah's own direct line of descent and the various collateral branches. Titles were given to his own brothers; to cousins of varying degree, and to a lesser extent, to members of the previous generation. In relation to the ruling house itself the council formed a council of elders, *abogujo olopu* drawn from one lineage. To the world at large the council was the executive body and corporate representative of the ruling house, and in a wider sense, of the royal clan as a whole. It had no other name than a set of terms that also describe membership of the clan; its members were the *amomata*, children of the Attah.

On all occasions when the Attah holds audience or appears in public the titled *amomata* form a distinct and privileged group, which takes precedence over the royal eunuchs, *amonoji*, royal servants, *amedibo*, palace slaves, *amadu Attah*, and the populace at large. (These are the basic divisions of palace organization). At the

annual festivals they attend the Attah in a body after the actual rites have been performed, bringing him back to the palace in triumph from the land shrine at the Erane festival, and being the first to acclaim the sacrifices to the royal ancestors that are made in the palace at the Egwu festival.

When the populace of Idah assembles, in the closing stages of these festivals, to congratulate the Attah, the *amomata* are the first to be received by him, and the first to receive a share of the kola, beer, and food that is distributed by the Attah. In the daily audiences held at the palace they are similarly privileged.

The *amomata* sit to the right and left of the Attah, in close proximity, whilst the rest of the audience face the king, at a distance, when the Attah enters the audience chamber, the councillors rise and screen the throne momentarily by standing in a close circle around it with arms raised, so that the king can sit and arrange his robes unobserved.

In daily life the high rank of the royal councillors was symbolized and maintained by a number of privileges. Traditionally, only they, the Attah, and the Achadu, had the right to wear a type of bright red cloth, *ododo*, to build rectangular houses, *Unyi aje*, or to ride horses in the ceremonial processions that took place during the annual festivals.

3.5 TITLE HOLDERS AND THEIR DUTIES:

Within the Igala group of titles there is a dual division of offices, one group being administrative in character and the other ritual. But this distinction is not an absolute one, most of the clans have some ritual duty to perform in connection with royal mortuary ceremonies, and the divisions merge in relations to the royal succession. Conversely, the holders of major priestly offices are also the heads of important

territorial segments outside the capital, and are involved to some extent in the secular hierarchy of authority. The Igala clans as a group are associated with the riverian area of the Kingdom, where their main settlements are located and where they also collect tribute. And their historical and geographical orientation towards the river is such an important principle of unity that their ritual and political functions in government should be regarded as complementary and not mutually exclusive

The titleholders with mainly ritual duties are: Ohiuga, Atebo, Eguola, Adokpulu, Onu Idokoliko, Uchalla Angwa and Ulimam.

(a) Ohiuga: The Ohiuga, or royal diviner, is a specialist in the Ifa system of divination, employing four strings of seeds pods. Ifa was traditionally consulted before any major decision of State was put into effect, and also in any crisis affecting the Attah; Ohiuga's role therefore was that of a priest to a state oracle.

(b) Atebo: The Atebo's office is associated with the collective authority of the royal ancestors, symbolized by the staff, *otutubatu*, of which he is the guardian. This staff completed the royal insignia of kingship, and had to be present whenever the Attah performed an important ritual in public. It complements the nine ritual staffs, **Okwute**, that represent the ruling dynasty from Ayagba onwards, and stands for the royal ancestors as a group, notably for the predynastic members and the Attahs who are no longer worshipped as individuals. This collective authority is immanent in the Atebo's office, and empowers the Atebo to rebuke the Attah publicly for any ritual offences. Like the senior councillors, the Atebo does not prostrate in greeting the Attah, but greets him as an equal. Again, when the Attah dies, the Atebo is summoned to

make the first offering, and puts on the dead kings robes. He ritually impersonates the king until, towards the end of the mortuary ceremonies, the masquerades *Okolo* and *Ilo* perform to symbolise the king's transition to ancestral status.

(c) Eguola and Adokpulu: These two are jointly responsible for the royal burial ground, *Ojaina*, and the former is also in charge of a set of nine *okwute* representing dead Attahs. Eguola and Atebo were jointly responsible for the offerings made to the royal ancestors during the annual Egu festival.

(d) Onu Idokoliko: Onu Idokoliko is the custodian of a shrine dedicated to a nature spirit, Idokoliko that is believed to inhabit the deep stream, *Ocheche*, flowing under the face of the cliffs on which the capital is situated.

(e) The Uchalla Angwa and the Ulimam: These are both Islamic priests, and leaders of rival sections of the Moslem community at Idah. In the past, the Uchalla angwa and the Ulimam acted as scribes to the court, as assistant judges, and as charm makers. The Angwa community led by Uchalla also performed an annual ceremony, the *ogane* that ritually cleansed the palace of evil. (Bston, J. S. 1968).

3.6 THE ACHADU AND THE KINGMAKERS:

The Achadu clan in Igalaaland is regarded as the kingmaker's clan. This is supported by the legend below as told in the royal sub clan at Idah:

When Ebelejonu became Attah she was a young girl and had no husband. She was fond of festivals where there was singing and dancing and one day went to a celebration arranged by the Igala Mela clans at *Igalogwa* (the name *Igalogwa* means

the first or premier Igala'), in their own section of the capital. At this festival she saw a slave belonging to the Igala mela, who was of striking handsome appearance. He was a man of Ibo origin who had come to the Igala area for hunting, had lost his way in the bush, and had been found and taken as a domestic slave by the Igala Mela, in whose territory he was hunting.

Ebelejonu was so much attracted by this person that she had him transferred to her own service, and eventually made him her consort. The Igala mela and her own followers were jealous of the husband's position and began to abuse him in her hearing. But she retorted that apart from the slave, *Ochai adu*, there should be no one with power like her own. This description was incorporated in the title of Achadu that the Attah then bestowed on her consort. It was also determined that this title would be hereditary in future, and that the Achadu would control all the land lying beyond the river Anambra to the east of Idah as his own hereditary fief.

Ebelejonu died childless, and the Attahship passed to her brother Agenapoje. Today, the Attah is still described as *Oy' Achadu*, the Achadu's wife, in memory of this early marriage, and this is also why the Attah Igala's ears are pierced like a woman's. The Achadu's position as kingmakers today is so unique and its based on the legend above, though this etymology is not accepted by the members of the Achadu's clan.

The Attah Igala exercises control over appointments to the headship of the provincial royal sub clans, but his own office is subject in this respect to the authority of the kingmakers at Idah, who control the election of a new king and umpire the rotation of authority amongst the four maximal lineages of the ruling house as mentioned earlier in the origin of the Attah of Igala. In the royal provinces there are

non-royal clans whose functions are analogous to those of the kingmakers at Idah, and who hold a similar range of titles. But their authority over the provincial chiefs is ritual and moral in character rather than political, since succession to these provincial offices is determined within the hierarchical structure of authority running through the royal clan as a whole.

The Achadus's roles as Kingmakers are further discussed in the accession to the throne of Attah.

3.6 ACCESSION TO THE THRONE OF ATTAH:

When the Attah dies, an interregnum is avoided by synchronizing the funeral rites of the dead king, which create a formal vacancy in the kingship, with the accession ceremonies of his successor. The absolute continuity of government is symbolized by the postponement of the official announcement of the Attah's death until an occasion when the new ruler could be proclaimed in the same utterance; in theory it was even forbidden for the herald to draw breath in the middle of this announcement. Unofficially, the news of the death had already been made public by breaking or inverting the roof of the palace tower, **Odogo**, the death could therefore be referred to euphemistically, but not in terms that would imply a vacancy in the Attahship and the consequent suspension of government.

The funeral rites is on the whole separated from responsibility for the accession ceremonies. The former devolved on the royal eunuchs, in conjunction with some of the Igala titleholders, whilst the Igala mela took the initiatives in preparing the new Attah for his office, and were the chief actors in the accession ceremonies proper. It is the Achadus' duty to send for the chosen candidate for the throne, and to bestow on

him the interim title of Adukainya (salutation, Todo). On arriving Idah from the provinces, the candidate spent several days in the Achadus' compound, where the Acahdu's wife pierced his ears, and he also made a formal payment to the Achadu for his right to the Attah's title. This stage, which coincided with the funeral ceremonies of the previous Attah, ends when the Attah leaves the Achadu's compound and goes to spend 9 days (nine) with Eguola the keeper of the royal graves at *Ojaina*. From here the Adokainya begins his formal entry to the capital by crossing the Inachalo stream to Ofukolo, where he is ritually reborn by the Onede, an Igala Mela chief, with the Onubiogbo, from the same group, acting as the Attah's father. This is the definitive rite of passage from the status of Adokainya to that of Attah, although the new Attah still has to be clothed in the King's ceremonial garments, and invested with the insignia of office. When this has been done, at the same site, the Attah mounts a horse and rides towards the palace. On the way he stops at the land shrine *erane*, and offers a tortoise and kola nuts; the act of sacrifice being performed by the Atebo, an Igala chief, whilst the actual invocation to the land is made by the Achadu. From the *erane* the Attah passes through the Igala mela quarters to his palace, receiving his first acclamation as King from the people of Idah.

In this ceremonial transition from the status of royal heir to that of the Attah, there are five (5) main stages these stages are summarized below:

In the first stage, the candidate becomes the wife of the Achadu and is prepared for the office. In the second, the Adokainya visits several shrines and remains at the last one visited, the royal burial ground. Next he is reborn, as Attah, and invested with the royal regalia. Fourthly, he makes an offering at the land shrine before entering the palace. And, finally, he offers to the royal ancestral shrine within the

palace, and also sends offerings to various other royal shrines that were not among those visited at the Adukainya stage. (Boston, J. S. 1968).

CHAPTER FOUR

IGALA TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Architecture is neither a purely artistic nor an exclusively technical activity. Its aim is to provide a material frame for the major part of human life, for work and rest, for religious, social and artistic activities. In order to achieve this end, the work of architecture – the building – must be strong to assure reliable shelter. It also must be well planned, to provide for comfortable use of its component parts. It must also satisfy a demand always inherent in the human mind, for aesthetic satisfaction: for that elusive, precious quality called beauty.

Thus a building is not an end in itself, but rather a means to an end, which is to satisfy the material and spiritual needs of the people for which it is created. As a natural result, among all the arts architecture is the most firmly linked with human life and reflects its dynamics most faithfully.

In consequence, all over the world familiarity with the architectural achievements of one's country or area, an understanding and appreciation of its traditions and development through the ages, it now almost universally considered to be an elementary means towards the formation of self-consciousness and self-assertion. The aim that is sought by these means is to create defence and regard, and finally love for one's own traditions.

In the course of this research several villages and major towns in Igalaland were visited and sampled to see the type of architectural composition most consistent in the

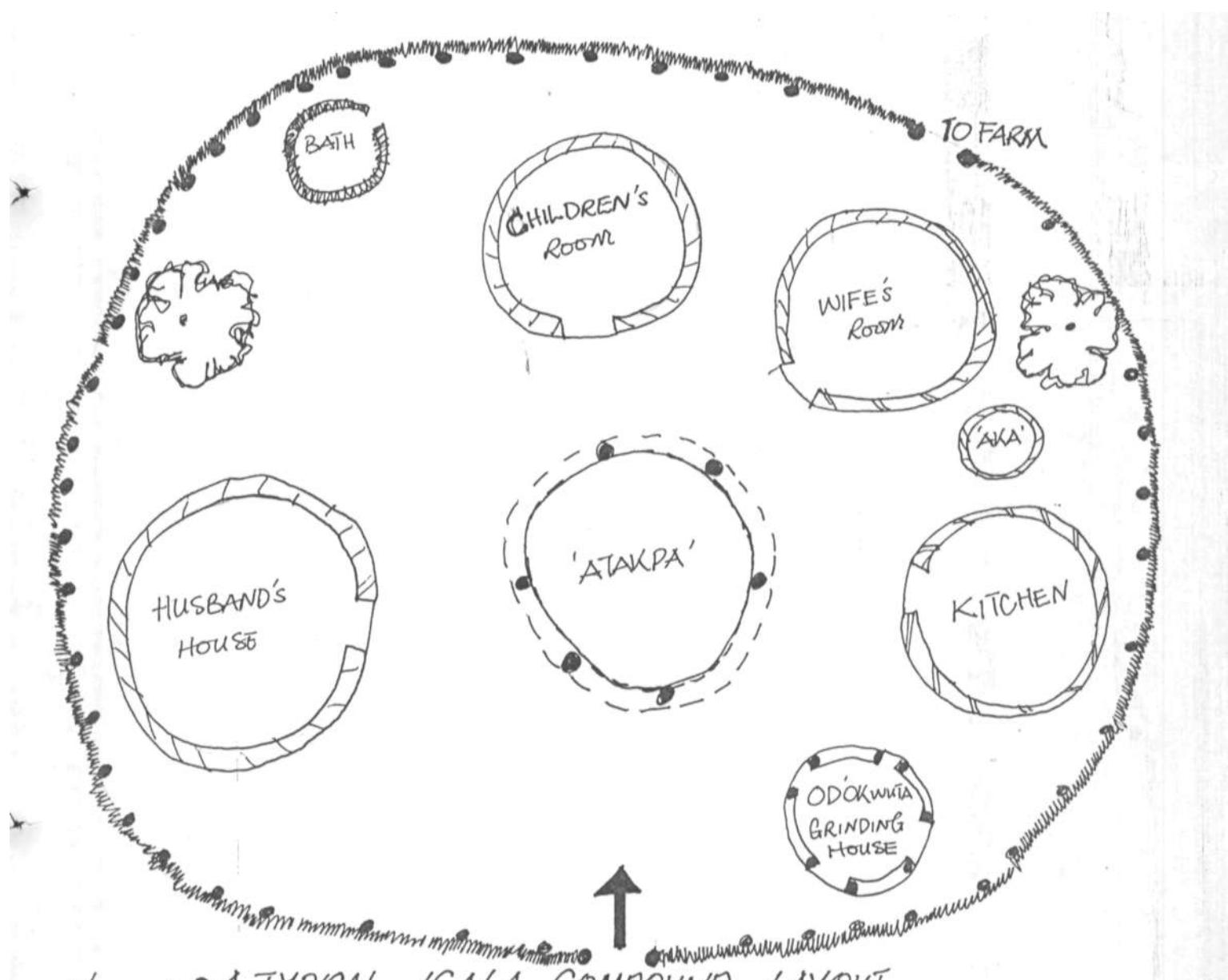


Fig 4.2.1a • A TYPICAL IGALA COMPOUND LAYOUT.
BELOW IS THE ELEVATION WITH THE 'ATAKPA'S'
ROOF SOURING HIGHER THAN OTHER ROOFS.

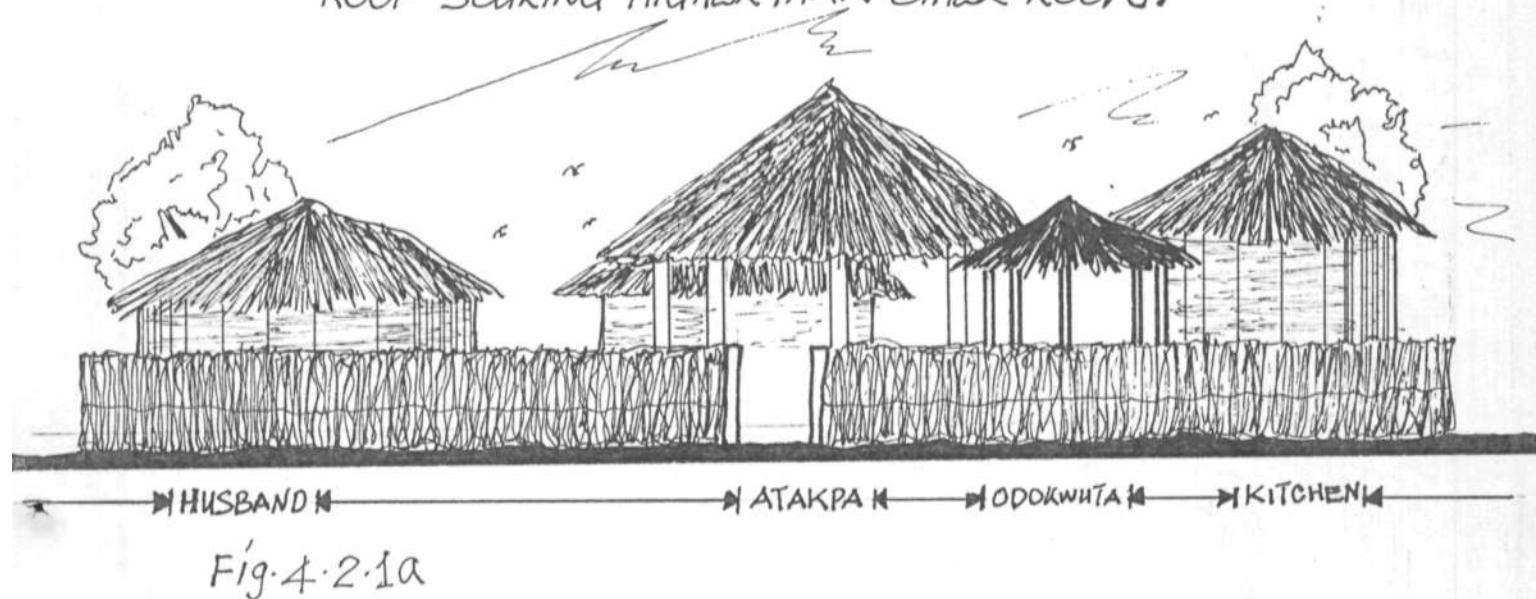


Fig. 4.2.1a

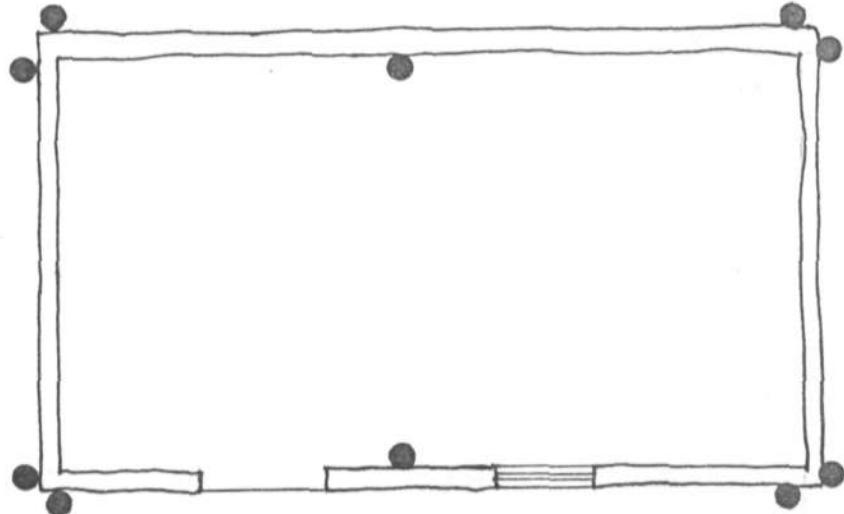
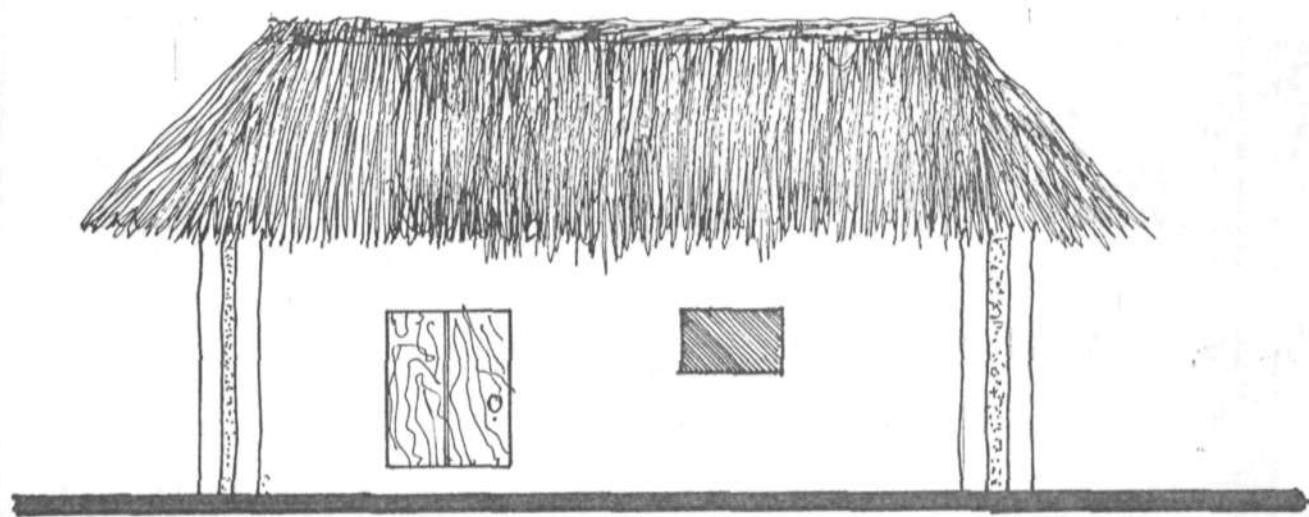


Fig. 4.2.1b. A TYPICAL PLAN OF A RECTANGULAR HUT AS
A SLEEPING HUT FOR THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD.



TYPICAL ELEVATION

areas visited and document such as the traditional architecture of the Igala people.

Some of these villages and major towns among several others include:

Ugwolawo, Umomi, Ejule, Ofakaga, Ibaji, Anyigba, Egume, Iyale, Ogbogodo, Ojogobi, Ankpa and Idekpa.

It is a common belief in Igalaland that the art of buildings is as ancient as man's existence on earth and that this art is passed down from generations to generations orally, and through inheritance, that is from father to son or from one qualified builder to an apprentice who has spent many years serving his master (the local builder).

This chapter shall in brief discuss the traditional architecture of the Igala people under the following headings:

Elements of Igala traditional architecture, Building types (Residential, Public buildings and Religious buildings), Building materials, Methods of construction and Site selection and preparation.

4.1 ELEMENTS OF IGALA TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE:

An element is generally defined as one of the fundamental forms of matter, such as hydrogen or carbon, from which all other materials are made. In like manner an element in building context or architectural context depicts a part of a building or structure with a distinct form. Examples include a foundation, wall or roof. Further more elements of architecture can cover most basic units within a house or a compound like; reception hall, bedroom, living or sitting rooms, storages, toilet facilities, kitchen, court yards and so on.

The elements of Igala traditional architecture include the following:

- (i) "Atakpa" (Reception hall or Shed)
- (ii) "Obukpa" (Kitchen)
- (iii) 'Odo Okwuta' (Grinding house)
- (iv) 'Anyi Ogwugwu' (Sitting room)
- (v) 'Anyi Udachi' (Bedroom)
- (vi) 'Unyi Ugwola' (Bathrooms)
- (vii) 'Unyi Ubi'oko (Toilet)
- (viii) 'Oji Ukpologu' (Leading road to the house)
- (ix) 'Odo' (wall)
- (x) 'Ere Unyi' (Foundation)

These listed above are some of the most important elements of Igala traditional architecture, which will feature most prominently in this chapter.

4.2.0 BUILDING TYPES:

Buildings generally are classified according to their uses. In Igala land the following building types are distinguished.

- (1) Residential buildings
- (2) Public buildings
- (3) Religious buildings
- (4) Farm buildings
- (5) Palaces.



Fig 4.2.1c

VIEW OF A ROUND 'ATAKPA' (COMMON LOUNGE)

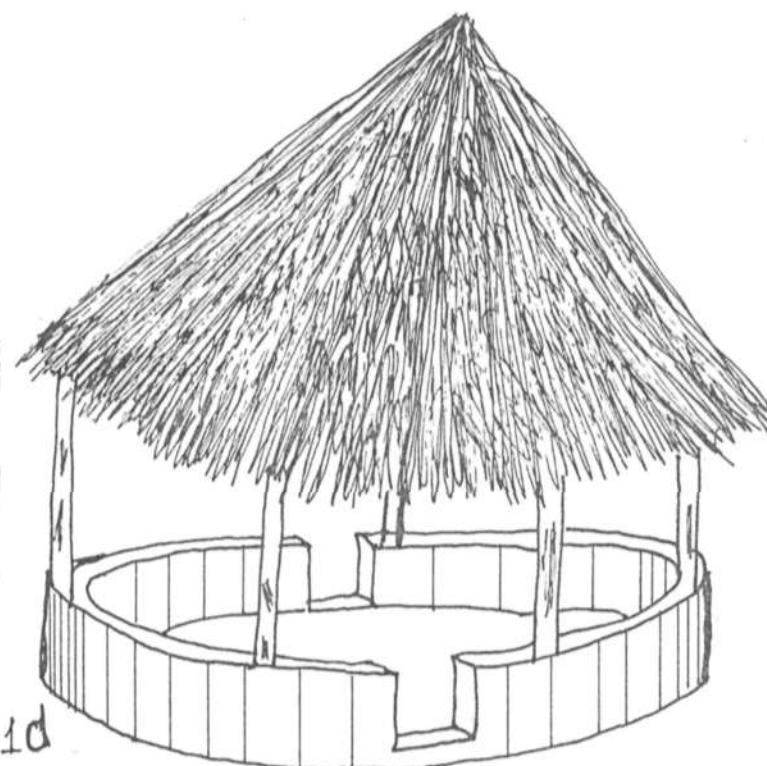


Fig 4.2.1d

VIEW OF A ROUND 'ATAKPA' WITH RAISED WALLS
OF ABOUT 1.2M.

4.2.1 Residential buildings:

Residential buildings in Igalaland can be broken down into:

- (i) Sleeping houses
- (ii) Obuka (kitchen)
- (iii) ‘Atakpa’ Reception hall and family meeting place or common lounge
- (iv) Odo Okuta (grinding house)
- (v) Unyi Ugwola (Bathrooms)
- (vi) Unyi Ubioko (Toilet)

(i) Sleeping Houses:

These are bedrooms for rest or for sleeping after a hard days job. These units could be round huts or rectangular huts. The rectangular huts are mostly identified with the men or heads of households while the round huts are for the women in most cases. The sizes of sleeping houses or bedrooms are usually larger than other types of structures for other purposes except the “Atakpa” (common lounge or the reception hall). A rectangular hut varies in sizes depending on the strength or wealth of the owner. It could be about 3metres x 2.8metres. Also the diameter of a round hut varies from about 2.5m upward depending on the strength and wealth of the head of the family.

A woman’s hut is usually equipped with “Akpata” (a form of false ceiling) made of corn stalk or palm frond stalk. Food item like cassava, corn, maize, are stored and continuously dried on *Akpata*, which is usually load bearing.

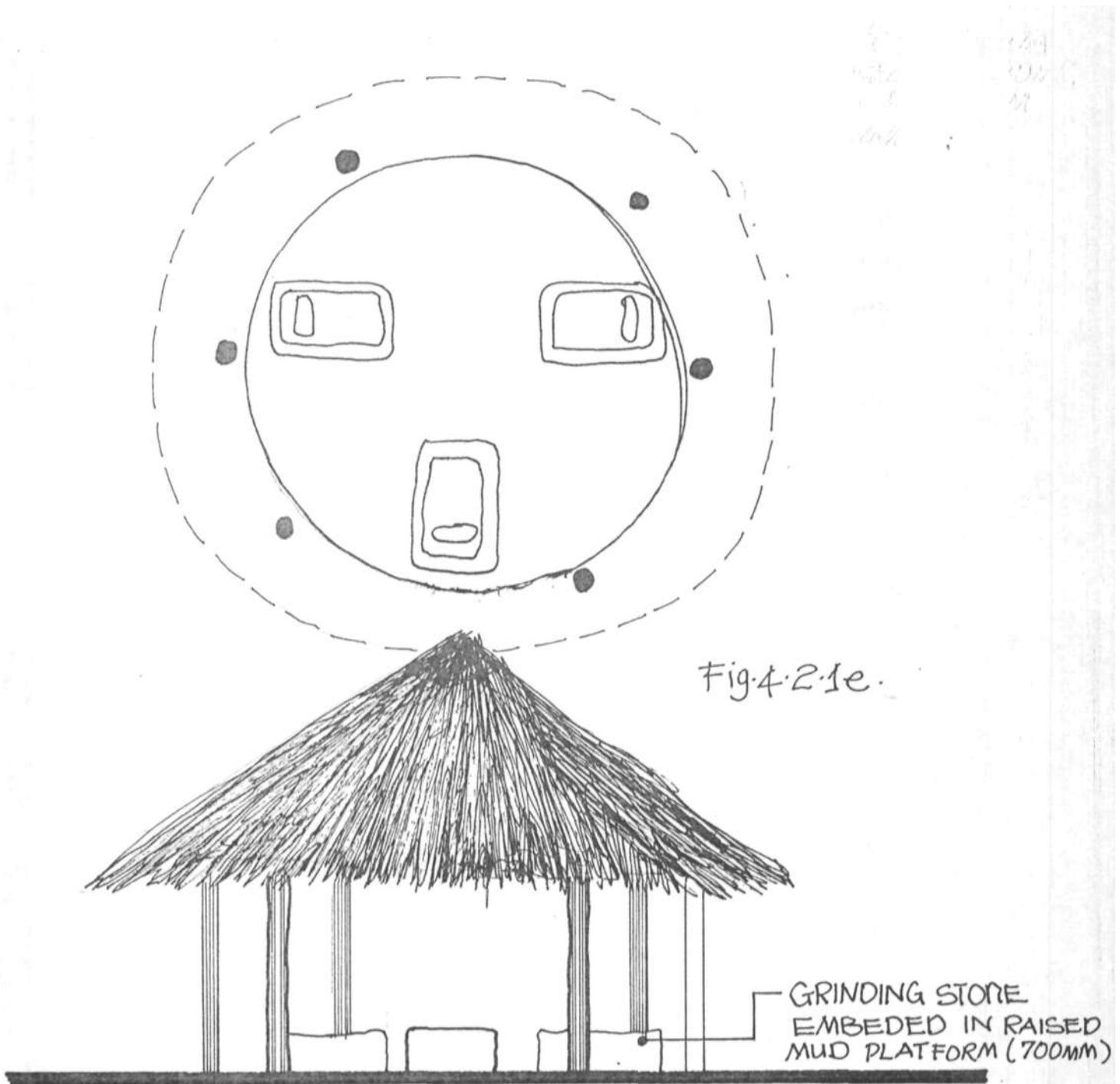


Fig.4.2.1e:A TYPICAL PLAN AND ELEVATION OF AN 'OD'OKWUTA' (GRINDING HOUSE). NOTE THAT THE THREE GRINDING STONES ARE EMBEDDED IN RAISED MUD PLATFORM OF ABOUT 700MM - 800MM HIGH FOR CONVENIENCE WHILE GRINDING.

This practice of having the '*Akpata*' in the sleeping huts of the women has gradually been phased out as separate huts are now being used as kitchen or '*Obuka*' where the '*Akpata*' is installed and used as firing space for food items.

Windows of sleeping rooms usually open into the compound or towards the '*Atakpa*' so as to see who comes into the compound. Another purpose of the window is the admission of light into the building and for ventilation. The windows could be made of wood, woven corn stalk among others as these items are found in abundance in various sections of Igala land. Doors are also constructed of wood or woven palm frond stalk.

KASHIM IBRAHIM LIBRARY

(ii) 'Obuka' (Kitchen):

A kitchen block mostly takes to the shape of a woman's hut but is usually smaller in size. These kitchens serve as both kitchens and stores as they are usually installed with '*akpata*' and an '*Igbeli*' (hearth) and pepper grinding stone mounted on mud stand. The hearth is usually directly under the '*Akpata*' for effective firing of food items stored on the '*akpata*'. Kitchens are mostly without windows.

Outdoors cooking is usually done closer to the kitchen during festivities or ceremonies that requires large scale cooking that the small kitchen cannot handle.

(iii) 'Atakpa' (Reception hall or common lounge)

The '*Atakpa*', which is the reception or lounge of the compound, is located at the central position in the compound and other units scattered around it. The '*Atakpa*' is usually the first place a visitor calls when he visits another compound. Family meetings, age group meetings, and sometime sitting may be done inside the '*Atakpa*'

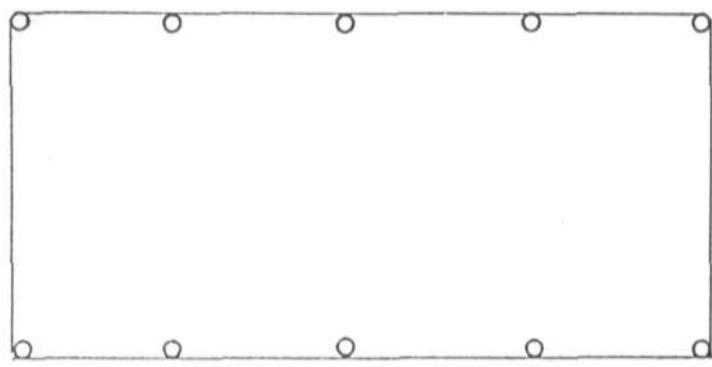


Fig.4.2.3a. TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN OF 'AJE' (MARKET SHED)

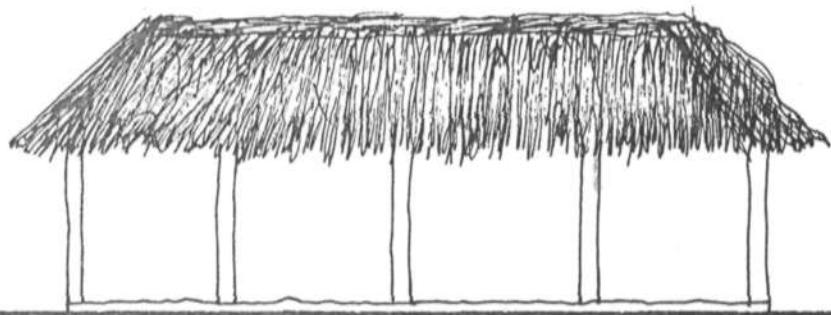


Fig.4.2.3b. TYPICAL ELEVATION OF 'AJE' (MARKET SHED).

because it is believed that the ancestors only visit the '*Atakpa*' because it is for everybody.

The shape of the '*Atakpa*' is obtained by the arrangement of pots and the use of corn stalk to wall the side to a height of 1.2metre leaving a space of about 800mm as an entrance, this entrance faces the path that leads to the compound. In most cases, the '*Atakpa*' is not walled. It consists only of posts (woods) and a roof over the structures of posts arranged round. The roofing frame is prepared on the ground and then lifted to the top and fastened to the posts by the use of ropes made out of creepers and finally thatched with bundles of grasses or palm fronds over the frame.

(iv) 'Odo Okwuta' (Grinding House):

'Odo Okwuta' is to a woman what an '*Atakpa*' is to a man. All forms of grinding apart from pepper are done here.

This is usually a circular structure of about 3m in diameter having all the structural properties of the '*Atakpa*' except that it is smaller in size. It contains a hearth built to a height of 1.2m on which grinding stone are placed for the purpose of grinding corn and millet.

The position of the 'Odo okwuta' in a compound is done in such a manner that neighbours may have easy access to it without getting into the inner parts of the compound; as such it is built near the entrance of the compound.

(V) 'Unyi Ugwola' and Unyi Ubioko' (Bathrooms and Toilets):

In the past, the Igalias do not have defined structures for bathrooms and toilets. Normally, behind any sleeping hut or in between a hut and a fence could serve as a bathing area, while men, women and children go into the bush behind their compound

'AKA' (BAN^R). FARM BUILDING.

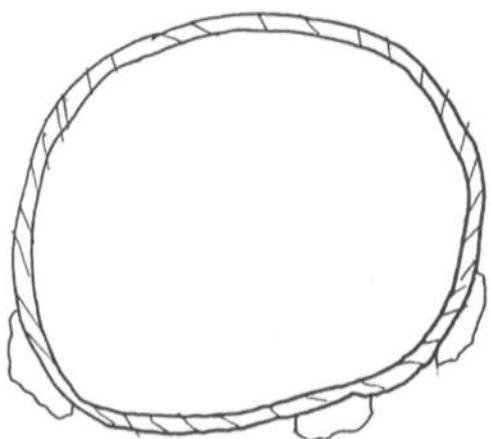
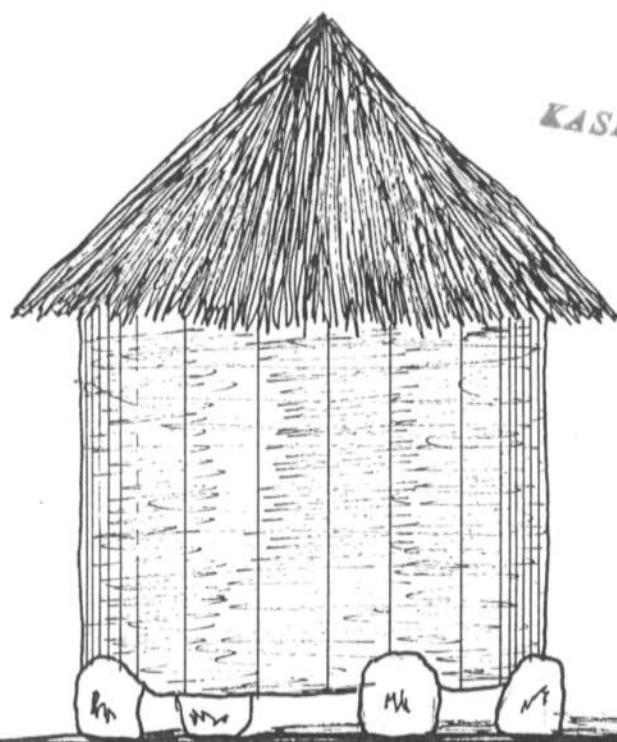


Fig. 4.2.4

A TYPICAL ROUND MUD 'AKA' (BAN^R)



A TYPICAL ELEVATION OF A MUD 'AKA' (BAN^R)
RAISED ON STONES FROM THE GROUND

to excrete. But later, pit latrines are dug behind compounds and walled with palm fronds without roofs as toilets and same structure put up separately as bathrooms with small entrance door way usually covered with wrappers while the place is being used.

4.2.2 Public buildings:

Public buildings in Igala land refer mostly to markets, village squares and public address courts.

Most markets in Igala land operate once in every five days and as such only temporary structures (*Aje*) are put up. These are sheds built by erecting post on which palm fronds are used as roofing materials.

The village hall, in most cases is a rectangular structure of open sides except for a short wall of about 1.2metres from the ground level. It is rectangular in plan with an area of about 40 square metres.

A town hall is built with open sides in order to ensure adequate ventilation considering the number of people required to seat inside.

Public address courts are mostly open spaces courts planted with trees to provide shade. For the audience, sometimes, the market square is used as a gathering place for the whole villagers especially on days when community projects are to be launched. Public address courts could also be located in the “Gago’s” (Village head). ‘Atakpa’ which is centrally located within the compound.

4.2.3 Religious buildings:

The people of Igala land before the coming of Christianity and Islam were predominantly idol worshippers and for that reason; temples were built only where

4.2.4 Farm buildings:

Farm buildings are generally for the rearing of animals and for the storage of farm harvest.

Livestock buildings are buildings to house animals e.g. goats, sheep and chicken rearing. For chicken there are always no special structures for their rearing. They normally stay in the room with human beings or stay in the kitchen for security.

Goats are sometimes housed under tree shades or under special roofed but not walled houses. In the night, for security reason, they are taken into sleeping rooms. In recent times, goats and sheep house are located at the back of sleeping houses or compounds.

Buildings for the storage of farm harvest are particularly different from normal sleeping rooms or buildings. These are known as '*Aka*' (barn). Depending on the materials for construction either mud or corn stalk, '*aka*' is normally raised on a platform away from the ground to prevent rodents from eating up the stored food crops. It is normally circular in shape.

4.2.5 Palaces:

The palace of district heads and village heads are not too different in architectural composition from the common man's compound as described earlier in 4.2.1. Residential buildings, it also consists of the 'Atakpa' (common lounge) though this time larger and bigger than the ones found in other houses since it caters for a large crowd when the chief sits in council to settle disputes or hold briefing with his followers. Next are the sleeping quarters, which are concentric of round and rectangular huts, arranged round the Atakpa as sleeping quarters or houses for his wives and slaves. This type of compounds, is usually larger, has more huts and

sometimes fenced with either mud or thatch material with an entrance hut called 'Zauli' for security purposes and to distinguish it from the common man's accommodation.

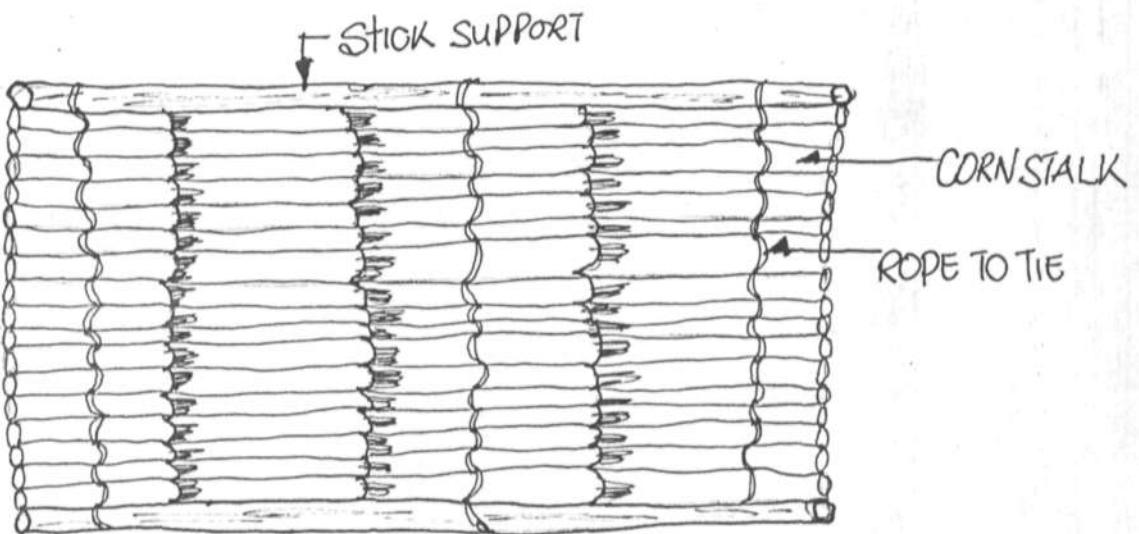
According to Daryll Forde in his book "Peoples of the Niger-Benue Confluence" (1955), "Compounds are not usually walled, nor are they constructed of inter-connecting houses, except in the case of chiefly compounds. Rather they consist in clusters of huts around open spaces. The several early descriptions of the Attah's palace at Idah agree that it was situated near the top of the well-known Cliff on the bank of the Niger, and that it consisted of many dozens of inter-connecting circular huts of the type described. The entrances had the low lintel and raised sill commonly still seen today".

4.3 BUILDING MATERIALS:

The building materials available to the Igala people is not too different from those obtained in traditional Nigerian settlements in the country except for slight variations, in quality and quantity and probably the geographical location of such building materials. The building materials needed for the construction of traditional buildings in Igala land are mostly located in the same area or region as the people, making it easy to gather materials needed for construction.

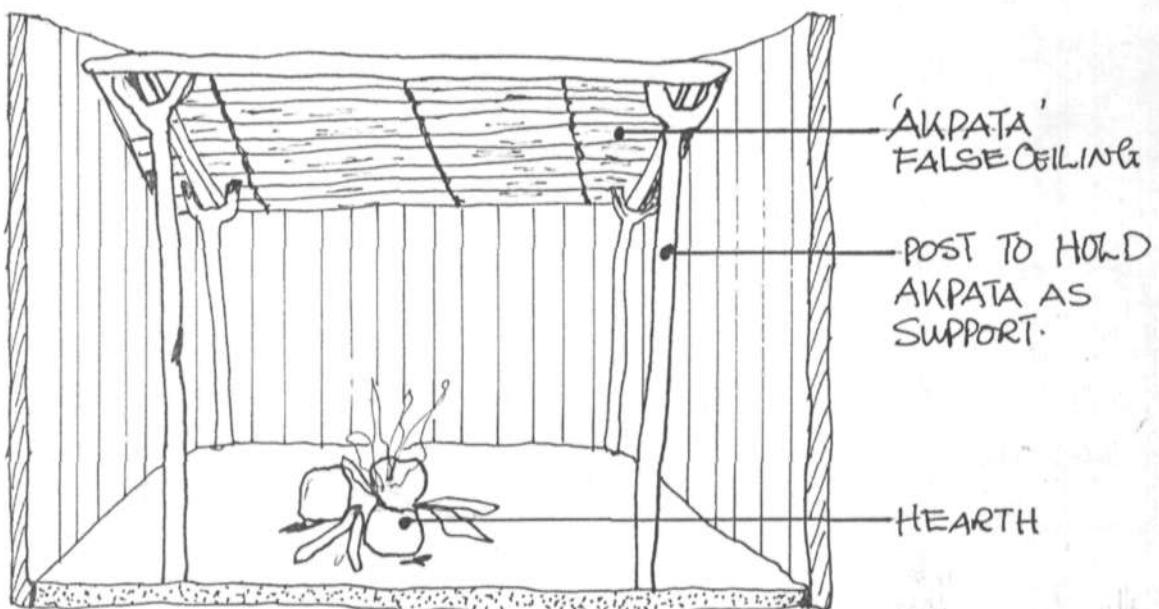
These materials include: Grass bundles, Sticks, Palm fronds, Oil palm and Raffia palm Deleb, Red earth and clay, Corn stalks, Ropes, Bamboo, 'Okpotoku' (thicker type of rope)

The building materials listed above and their functions in Igala architecture would be discussed briefly below.



PLAN OF 'AKPATA' (FALSE CEILING.)

Fig. 4.3f.



A TYPICAL KITCHEN INTERIOR

(a) Grass bundles:

There are different types of grasses in Igala land and they are used as roofing materials. These include the following:

- (i) "Iwo" – (*imperata Cylindrica*)
- (ii) "Ichicha" – (*Briza Maxima*)
- (iii) "Akanyi" – (*Raffia Vinifera*)

(i) "Iwo" is used to roof small buildings like shrines and also a temporary constructions done on farms to protect small children from the sun and for the adults too to rest from the scouring sun in the farm. This specie of grass has the ability to resist rot and it is durable.

(ii) "Ichicha" is longer and large type of grass specie unlike "Iwo", therefore it can be used to thatch residential buildings and can be pitched at a very high angle. This is done by laying them in layers from the bottom to the top, one layer on the other progressively to the top.

(iii) "Akanyi" consists of sheets of raffia fronds laid one on the other. It is neater and last longer than the other two mentioned above. This requires skilled men to weave them into sheets.

(b) Sticks:

There exist different types of sticks in use in Igala land. The popular among them is the "Ochinobi" (black stick), which has the ability to resist rot and termite attack, for at least fifteen years. They are used as roof frame members and the Y-woods are used as columns on which the roof frames or rafters rest.

water as necessary until the mixture attains the desired density and plasticity. The mass is then thrown out onto a heap and covered with banana leaves or grass for protection from the sun and rain.

This is later worked upon and moulded into paste oval bricks for wall construction.

(f) **Corn stalks:**

Corn stalks are mostly used for the construction of local silos or food barn and the construction of '*Akpata*', false ceiling, for the storage of food items in the kitchen.

(g) **Ropes:**

The popular types of local ropes available to the Igala people for construction purposes are the "Ekabeje" and the "Ajiripu awi" which are got from the forest. They are used for tying sticks together, in place of nails.

(h) **Bamboo and "okpotoku":**

These two materials are mostly used as horizontal reinforcement materials in wall construction. Bamboo can be used in roof framing and in recent constructional methods in Igala land as scaffolding since they are found in abundance all over Igala land. Bamboo also can be used as flute (musical instrument) for masquerade festivals and so on.

4.4 METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION:

Construction methods applied by the Igala people all over the land are basically the same except for some slight variation in probably techniques and details. The

construction methods shall be discussed broadly under the following headings:

Foundation, Floors, Structural frames and walls, Roofs, Doors and windows.

(a) Foundations:

Basically, the foundation type commonly used in Igala land is the strip foundation where a trench is dug and a wall built up and consolidated to give it a strong solid base. And this is due to the fact that Igala soil generally have a relatively strong sub-soil near the surface, and that most walls are non-load bearing because of stick columns applied in most cases.

(b) Floors:

There are basically two main materials used for floor construction and finishes. These are Red earth and white clay obtained from pits near streams. The white clay is the finishing material while the red earth serves as both over site 'concrete'. The following steps are taken in the floor construction.

- i. The red earth is poured on top of the hard core,
- ii. Mostly young men and women do consolidation by stumping on the floor with their feet randomly and at the same time sprinkling water,
- iii. Or palm stalk is bent into C-shape and the flat end used to beat the floor till it is well compacted,
- iv. Then, the red earth is made into a paste and used over the over site earth to produce screed,
- v. The floor is then finally finished with white clay as an additional floor finish.

Additional techniques employed by the Igala people in their floor construction, include:

Addition of palm oil waste to the red earth before mixing to give the red earth duct ability and durability free from wear and tear and Boiled locust bean water is also added to the red earth or the white clay for durability and strength.

(C) Structural frames and walls:

Materials used for wall construction in Igala land are simple and few. The smaller sticks are used as reinforcement materials for the walls, while red earth or dull clay mixed with water to the required thickness can be made into oval bricks and used as walling material. Sun dried bricks and palm fronds are also used for wall construction.

A prominent finishing material is the ash clay, which is made into a paste and applied to the completed wall. This is done after the wall has been plastered with red earth paste and white washed with cassava waste water and sometimes the walls are finished in white clays, giving it a fine texture.

To give the red earth strength and durability locust bean water is boiled and added to the paste.

The following are the types of walls commonly constructed in Igala land:

- (a) "Egwu" (non paste Earth and non-reinforced) wall.
- (ii) "Ichala" walls (Palm frond walls)
- (iii) Reinforced red earth walls
- (iv) Non-reinforced red earth walls.

(i) ‘Egwu’ walls:

This type of wall construction consist of loose red earth not mixed with to paste and does not require any form of reinforcements.

As the earth is brought to the site, it is immediately used up so that it does not dry before it is required. The builder in this case is expected to move with the speed of the labourers.

White clay is also mixed into paste with locust bean water and used to plaster this wall to give it strength and durability.

(ii) ‘Ichala’ wall:

These are walls built out of palm fronds and reinforced with sticks. It is usually erected on the same spot where the permanent house is to be erected so that when it is time to build a permanent house, the palm fronds are removed and an earth wall constructed under the existing roof. In other words it is a temporary form of wall construction, which could also be applied in the construction of Garden, fence and bans. But the following disadvantages are associated with Ichala walls;

- Lack of privacy
- Lack of security
- Easy penetration by rain water
- High rate of combustion
- Highly biodegradable.

(iii) Reinforced Red Earth Walls:

This undoubtedly is the most widely used type of wall in Igala land, presently, comprising of deleb palms (*Borassus Flabellifer*) or sticks as reinforcement. In between this vertical palm delebs or stick reinforcement, walls are erected of red earth made into tiny oval bricks, which are wet. In the process of erecting the walls, all the horizontal and vertical reinforcements are covered up and those not properly covered up are finally covered up during plastering.

(iv) Non-Reinforced Red Earth Walls:

This type of wall is a modified version of the 'Egwu' wall. In this system of wall, the red earth is first mixed with water to a very plastic state and then kneaded into lumps about 30 centimetres diameter, then thrown into position and pressed hard with the hands into a layer of 30 to 50 centimetres high. When dry, another layer is added and so it continues until the desired height is attained. Sometimes the layers are slightly bevelled at the top, which permits the upper layer to overlap the lower and to be spread over it thinning away gradually. This is intended as a binder between the separate strata of the wall, which is later, smoothed over with a coat of plaster.

(d) Roofs:

Roofs are coverings over buildings generally meant to protect the interior of buildings from sun, rain and frost. They also protect walls from harsh weather conditions by their overhangs. Roofs generally in Igala land are rested through their roof – beam directly on a ring of vertical posts which stand just outside the wall. The posts or columns are mostly Y – shaped relatively thick woods. They are ant resists, rot free and resist fire effectively.

Roofs in Igala land are basically of two types: rectangular houses and for round huts. The natural type of roof for a rectangular building is a gable roof. The Igala builders took account of the heavy rainfall and always made the verges protruded over the end walls. The gable was thatched in a way similar to the longitudinal sides of the roof, or even by means of a special arrangement of its rafters and battens, slightly inclined towards the ridge.

Roof frames for round huts are however, prepared on the ground before being mounted on the hut, this is because of the fact that the frame materials are not strong enough to support the weight of the workers involved in the construction. In like manner, only one person goes up to the top of the frame in order to avoid destroying the framework.

(e) Doors and windows:

Openings in houses serve the following purposes.

- (i) For admission of light
- (ii) For ventilation and
- (iii) For admittance into and out of the buildings.

Windows in traditional Igala houses were just very little openings of about 200mm x 200mm without any form of shutters or frames, later, weaved fronds of raphia palm were used to cover the window openings.

The doors were equally treated in like manner, that is having low lintel and raised sill. Doors and windows are now in Igala land presently being furnished in timber carved out of complete tree trunks. Since these woods are found in abundance all over Igala land.

in the collection of red earth for the building of houses. The women fetch water from streams nearby and the children collect the paste of red earth materials. The more hands a person has during construction, the faster and better the builder builds.

4.5 SITE SELECTION AND PREPARATION:

Land ownership in Igala land is normally that through inheritance from forefathers or land given to one by his kinsmen for him to set up his compound. This land is cleared of bush and probably some trees would be fell to give way for construction. Depending on the kind of tree, the trunks and branches would be useful in the construction of the buildings. Sometimes in Igala land Oracles are asked over land before construction actually begins. This is done in order to get full blessings from one's forefathers or get the permission from the oracle ascertaining the safety of the site for the erection of buildings.

Building materials are then assembled on the site. Depending on the availability of these building materials, It could take a week or more to get them assembled. Before the actual measurements of room sizes are done, raising dust and observing the direction of the movement of the wind determine the orientation of buildings. Measurements of rectangular buildings are done by the means of a rope, which is equal to the length of an existing building or by foot to the required length of the owners of the building provided he can provide all the necessary building materials for the building.

For round huts, a stick is pinned at the chosen centre of the room and a rope of the determined radius attached to it and it is used to mark out the circle for the hut.

The art of building in Igala land is handled strictly by professional builders who over the years have taken this trade as their exclusive right, though combining that with domestic farming during the raining season, since most houses are built after raining season to prevent collapse of buildings. Women and children are most useful

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 CASE STUDIES

In order to propose a re-development for the existing palace of the Attah of Igala, some palaces were visited to study the existing facilities within these palaces. The palaces visited are: The Oba of Benin's palace, The Deji of Akure's palace, The Emir of Zaria's palace, The Emir of Kano's palace and The Attah Igala's palace. The major reason for the choice of these palaces is the relationship and link that has existed over the years between these kingdoms and the Igala kingdom from time immemorial as enumerated in Chapter Two; Literature Review. This will ultimately guide the designer in the proper planning of the Attah's palace, achieve maximum utility of spaces, portray the Eminence of the user, by varying size of buildings within the complex and by extension reflecting the traditional pattern of planning blended with modern architecture as the society is a dynamic one. That is, it moves with the current wave of change in architectural compositions and materials.

5.1 OBA OF BENIN'S PALACE, EDO STATE, NIGERIA:

The Oba of Benin's palace in Benin City is located in the heart of the city. The palace is accessible from every part of the city. In front of the palace is the Benin central market, Oba market and to the Northeastern side of the palace is the Uredo Local Government Secretariat complex. To the Eastern side of the palace stands the Benin cultural centre separated from the palace by the Airport Road.

The palace of the Oba of Benin apart from being the official residence of the Oba, it also fulfilled further requirements among which are; the administrative arm of the traditional institution in Edo state, and it also serves as the focal point of religious

rituals as the Oba is regarded as a divine ruler. The palace remains the hub of the state for the Edo people, and on it their pride and affection are centred. The sacred kingship is the focal point of the Benin political system. Therefore the palace as earlier stated combines the functions of a residence and of an ecclesiastical, temple-like building as there are several shrines within the palace and for this reasons, several traditional and spiritual ceremonies and rites are held in the palace from time to time for which all Benin citizens are expected to converge at the palace.

Senior officials regulate the life of the royal court: Palace chiefs (*eghaevo n'ogbe*). They are organised into three palace associations (*otu eguae*), each of which performs special functions in the Oba's household. The most senior are the *iwebe*, the Oba's personal and domestic servants; the Oba's own living and sleeping apartments are in their section of the palace. The third group, *ibive*, have in their care the harem (*erie*), the wives and children of the Oba. Each of these three groups supervises its own section of the palace, into which the other two are not allowed.

It could be noticed clearly from above that the palace is divided into various sections:

- (a) The Oba's official section, which is subdivided into:
 - (i) His sleeping and living rooms which incorporates his personal shrine rooms,
 - (ii) The harem- women and children quarters located within the Oba's section of the palace but surrounding his official section within a large compound clustered with many buildings.
- (b) The servants quarters, which comprises loosely linked buildings just adjacent the Obas' official compound. This section houses all the

servants within the royal palace and their families. The buildings are of red earth construction called locally *eke* but with corrugated iron roofing sheets.

- (c) The Chief Priest and some other shrine priest are housed within the palace.
- (d) The administrative unit of the Benin traditional council, which is a storey building, is also located within the palace. The building is of sand Crete blocks and roofed with corrugated iron roofing sheets, but the floor of the first floor is of wooden construction and therefore the partitions of offices on the first floor are of wooden partitions.

The façade of the main palace is more than 50meters long. In front of the palace is a large square well lawned with grasses, which is being used as ceremony ground with canopies erected during such occasions.

Outside the palace courtyard are separate alters for some famous kings of the past among whom is Oba Ehengbuda who reigned about 1578 A.D, and the huge red earth building containing alters to past Obas *Ugha Eroba*. See pictures below.

Fig. 5.1a. Floor plan, Oba of Benin's Palace:



(Source: Dmochowski, Z.R. 1990)

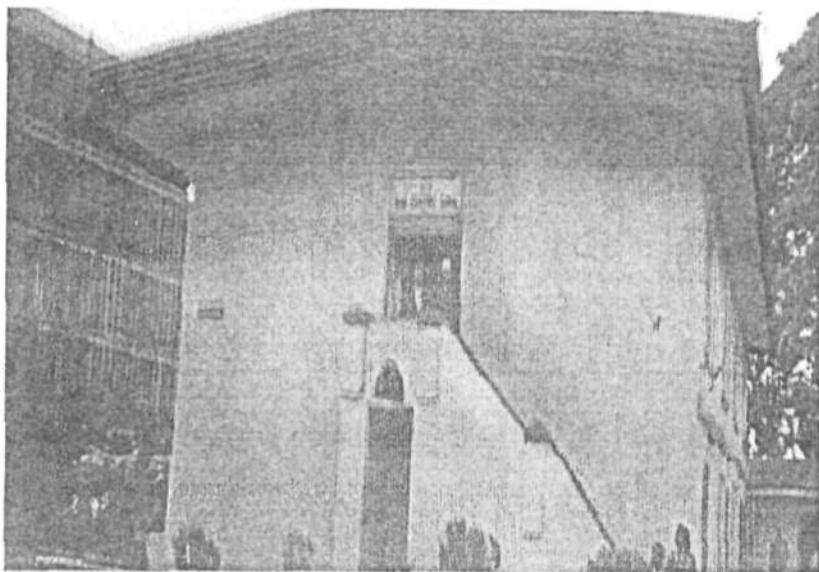


Plate 5.1a. *The Benin Traditional Council (BTC)*

Office block in the Palace. (Source: Field Survey).

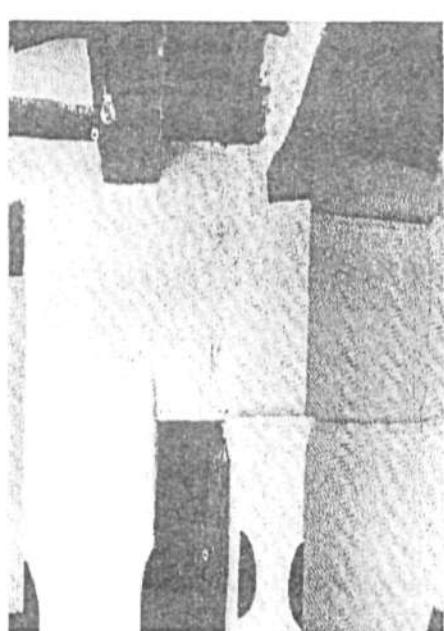


Plate 5.1b. *Oba's palace, room 7*

(Source: Dmochowski, Z.R. 1990)

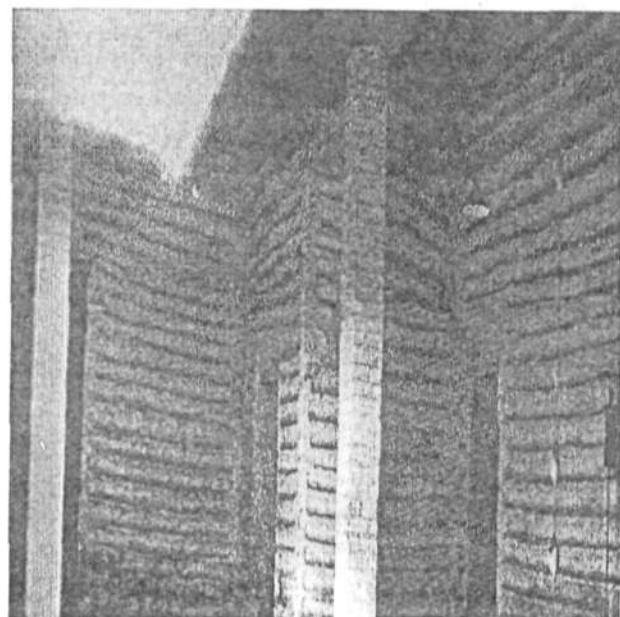


Plate 5.1c. *Oba's palace, room 1*

Pictures of the Palace:



Plate 5.1d. *Oba's palace main façade.* Note the beautiful landscape of the complex and the corrugated roofing sheet showing modern influence of Architecture on the palace. (Source: Field survey).

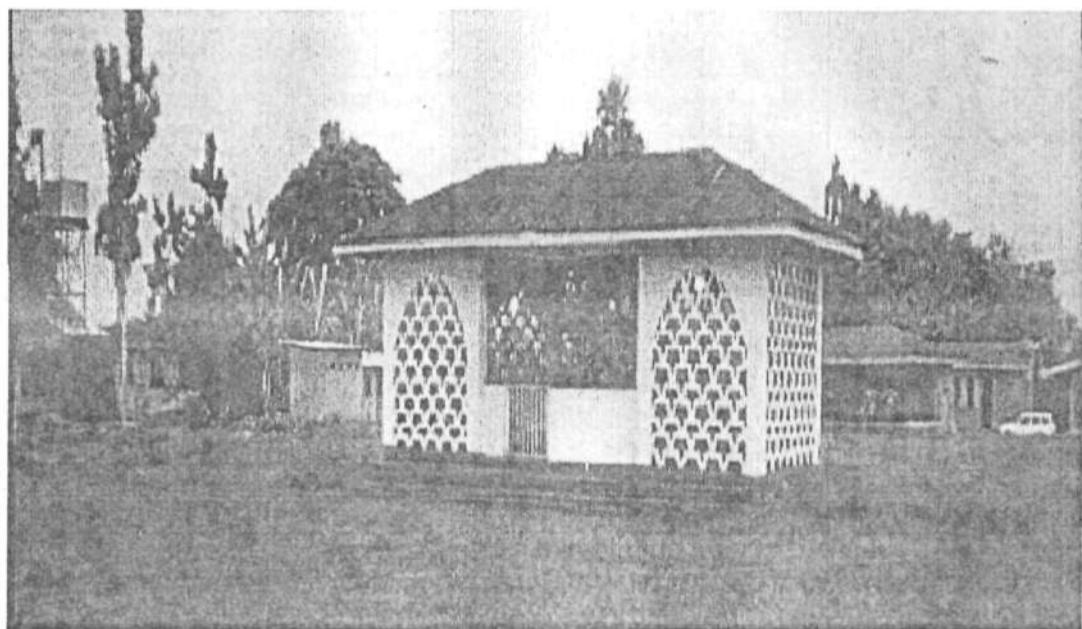


Plate 5.1e. *Ugha-Ehengbuda shrine; This shrine is in memory of Oba Ehengbuda who reigned about 1578 AD. Some 'Ugie ceremonies are held here. (Source: Field survey)*

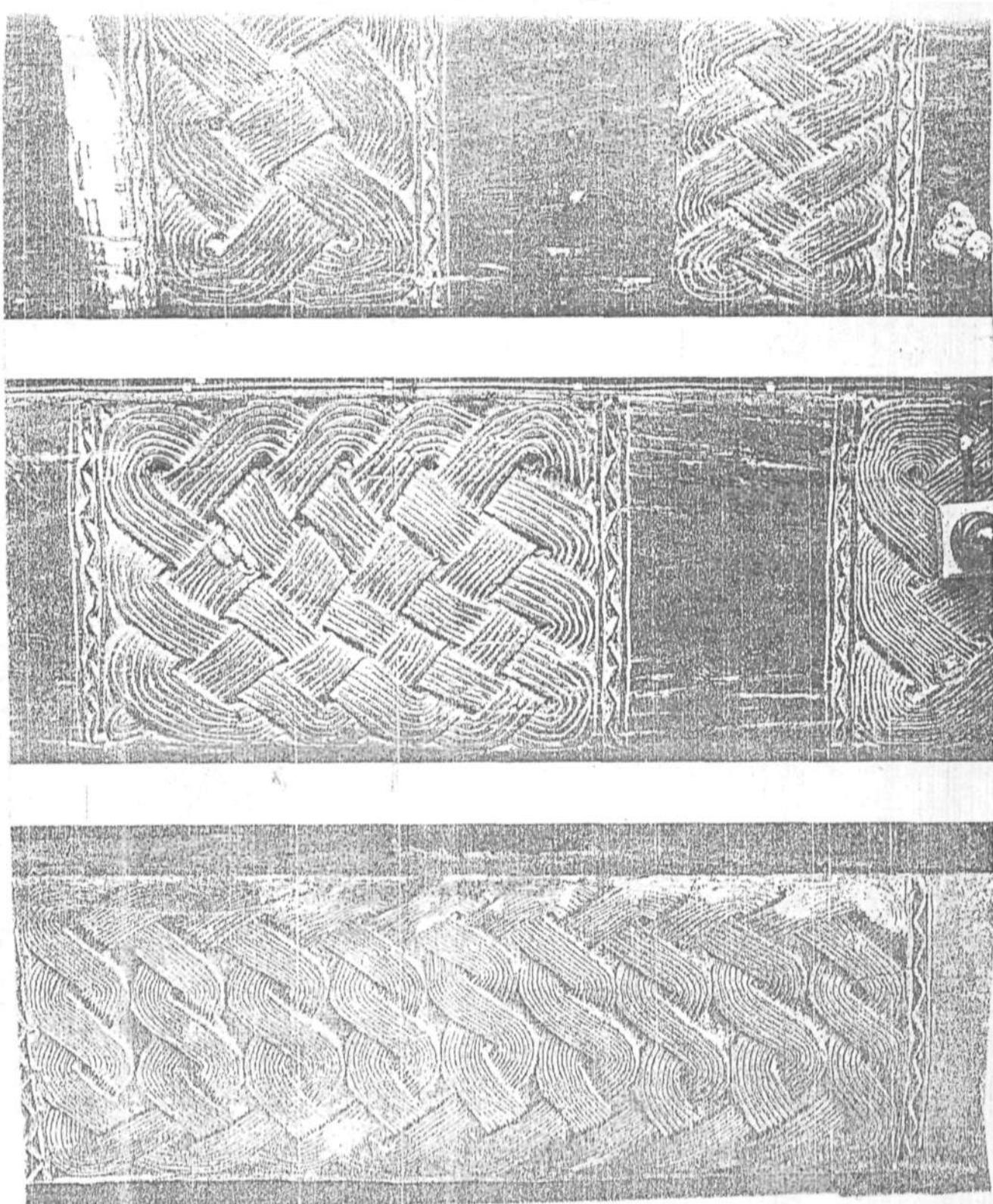


Plate 5.1f. Details of decorations or plaited designs on beams. (Source: Dmochowski, Z.R
1990)

The front façade of the palace is not uniform consisting of a large number of buildings of varying size and character. It runs from east to west, and some parts of the elevation are made from cement blocks, others of brick. Other parts of the place are executed in the traditional manner with five layers of red-brown building earth.

All most all the rooms have an impluvium in the centre, with a rather small compluvium formed by lean-to roofs. The most characteristic elements of the main apartments are the four large recesses, which enclose the rectangular interior, giving it the shape of a Greek cross with short limbs. Apartments of this type, are numbered 3,6 and 7 on the floor plan. The floor plan description is giving below, on the next page.

ROOMS	DESCRIPTION
1	Council chamber (approached through door 3 on the plan)
2	<i>Egha neva-</i> It is here that the Oba celebrates the daily <i>Zematon</i> ceremony. The room is accessible to all the chiefs.
3	<i>Okuekpen</i> , the Oba's sitting room.
4	<i>Ugha</i> or <i>Eghodo agba</i> . This room is for the <i>ibewe</i> chiefs only. The Oba meets the <i>ibewe</i> chiefs in this room.
5 and 6	Are for the <i>ibewe</i> chiefs. Room 5 serves as an antechamber to room 6.
7	<i>Ugha aru uhumwu</i> , which means courtyard of the shrine of the head. Only the <i>iweguae</i> are allowed entry, and also the <i>ihogbe</i> , priest of the ancestors and of the reigning Oba's head.
8	Ancient shrine room.
9	Shrine room dedicated to <i>aru oluku</i> god of human fertility and wealth.
10	
11	
12	This is the courtyard where the Oba meets the <i>iweguae</i> chiefs.
13	Courtyard 13 is dedicated to the spirit of chiefs and servants who died in the palace in the service of the Oba.

SUMMARY:

Tradition is greatly upheld in Benin Palace. Some of the buildings within the palace are of local construction, that is using the traditional *eke*, a building earth known for its structural value. Palace workers on a constant basis are constantly maintaining

these buildings. Though most of the buildings within the palace are now plastered with cement and painted with emulsion and oil paint, the palace could be said to marry both traditional and modern architecture as its plan remain unchanged from time immemorial as far back as 1200 A.D. The modern influence of architecture can be seen from the corrugated iron roofing sheets instead of the old way of Benin roof construction, which is of palm fronds.

The original form of construction of Benin roofs constitute the rafters, *itue*, which were supported not by wall plate but by a construction which in its flexibility resembled the constructions found in various other parts of Nigeria, for example among the Yoruba's and Igbos, or the Nupe in the north. Rows of strong pegs, *ukeke*, were set at an angle of about 60 to 70° 30cm below the top of the palace walls, and also in the mid-height of the architraves surrounding the compluvium. The end of the pegs supported a kind of purlin, *ikpawe*, which ran parallel to the walls and carried the rafters. These three elements, *ukeke*, *ikpawe* and *itue*, were fastened together with a creeper, *aleke*.

This construction was then thatched, using either palm fronds or the large leaves of the thaumatococcus tree, called locally *ebe-eni*. This original traditional roofing system is now being relegated to the interior villages in Edo state, not a single building within the palace has a thatch roof.

The modern influence also transcends to the new office buildings within the palace complex, which are constructed purely of sandcrete blocks, cement and iron roofing sheets and the doors and windows made of steel and glasses. (Dmochowski, Z.R. 1990)

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ATTAH'S PALACE, IDAH, KOGI STATE.
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5.2 DEJI OF AKURE'S PALACE, AKURE, ONDO STATE:

This great architectural masterpiece of the Deji Akure is described fully below with the help of Dmochowski in his book "An Introduction to Nigerian Traditional Architecture.(1990 Volume 2).

"Afin Akure is beautifully situated on rising ground and its architects took full advantage of the spatial possibilities of building levels of terrain. This great compositional quality is strikingly apparent immediately after passing the main gatehouse in *uwa nla*, the largest courtyard in the palace, which is used for large gatherings of people during festivals and meetings (1). The courtyard and its gatehouse occupy the whole depth of the palace, and are oriented almost exactly E-W. The courtyard is flanked by colonnades: in its north part it rises towards the west, where there stands a multi-pillared structure (a somewhat enlarged *kobi*) which provides a frame for the throne of the Deji, the Oba of Akure (fig. 5.1). The approach to the throne, up several terrace-like steps, is indeed most impressive, and emphasises the elevated position of the sacred ruler. The Deji has his own passage to a roofed apartment, *uwa ogoga* (2), which contains alters to Olokun, Ogun Jesha, Ogun Akure and Ogoga. They guard the entrance to a group of rooms devoted to the ritual and administration of the kingdom. The level of *uwa ogoga* is higher than west side of the main courtyard, and the Deji's courtiers have access to it up a steep flight of wooden step. *Uwa ogoga* has two doorways: The east door leads through a small antechamber to *uwa elese* (3). This is the place where past Deism are worshiped, and also a place for criminals and offenders. In the south wall of *uwa ogoga* there is an entrance to *uwa ibura* (the oat taking courtyard) (4) where the Deji and his chiefs take their oat of office. The last courtyard in this line is the large *uwa ojukoto* (5) where confidential

meeting takes place between the Deji and his chiefs about secrete affairs of state. During important festivals the Oba receives selected representatives of the youths of the kingdom in this courtyard. A number of separate cubicles (fig 5.2 and 5.3) along the west veranda of the courtyard are devoted to the worship of past Obas.

Somewhat to the east of the door from *uwa ibura* is a second door in the north wall providing access to a number of smaller courtyards also linked with ritual and administration. The first of these interiors about 60 centimetres higher than the level of *ojukoto* contains a shrine known as *oriole* (6) where sacrifices ordered by the ifa oracle are made. In the north wall of *uwa ikomo* (7) where the Deji entertains ikomo warriors, a now almost extinct group. *Uwa ikomo* has no impluvium and is covered by a modern roof on studs, set on the joists of the ground floor, which allows light and air to enter (fig 5. 4). The second door leads to the urinal, which has a wide impluvium (8). East of it but entirely separated by a wall is a court chamber (*uwa odo aya*) (9) where the Deji pass judgement between plaintiffs and defendants. The last of the public apartments of Afin Akure is the narrow and very elongated *uwa ogoro* (10).

The proportions of the plan of this interior create excellent perspective effects, accentuated by the long strip of light coming from the impluvium (plate 5. 1) *Uwa ogoro* is separated from *uwa ojukoto* by a wide flight of steps rising to a height of 1.3meters. It forms an area isolating the official part of the palace from the private apartment of the Deji and his numerous wives. These are completely segregated from the public areas and the only link between the two parts of the palace is a narrow passage, *uwa agaba* (11), exclusively for the use of the Oba. It leads to the first of the women's' apartments, *uwa imorum* (12).

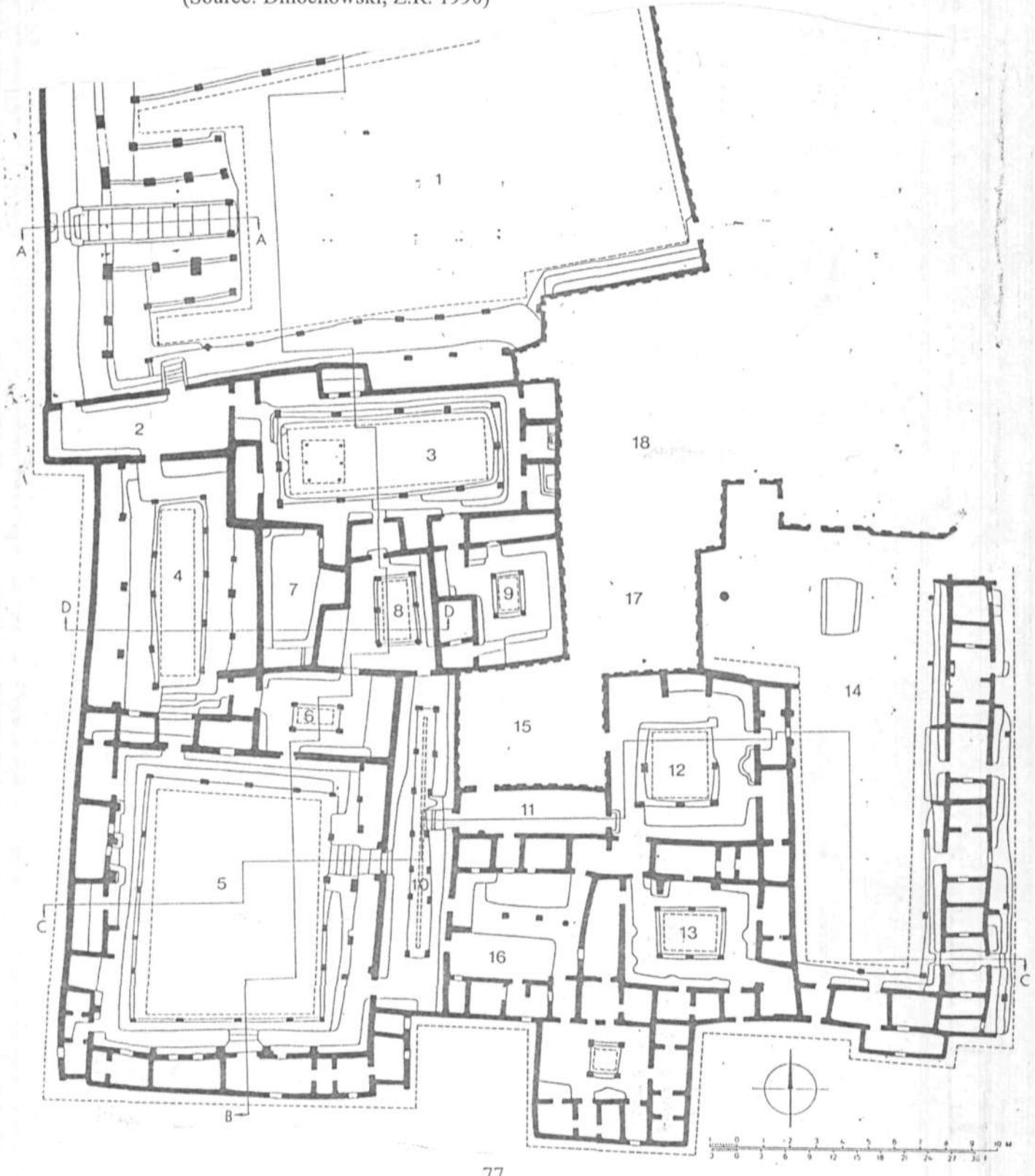
Imorum and the courtyard to the south of it (*uwa lake*) (13) stand on the verge of a vertical escarpment more than 2meters above the great courtyard *uwa ojuto* (14). Together with courtyard (15 and 16) it is the last courtyard of the courtyards for the exclusive use of the wives of the Oba.

Uwa odo ule (17) is a secluded apartment of the Oba, where only special palace servant and virgins could enter..... and serve his needs. North of this and entirely isolated from the entrance courtyard and from the gatehouse is *uwa odo owa* (18), one of the places where the Deji meets his wives.

The decorations of the interiors, both mouldings and woodcarvings are rather restrained. The tapering loam-built pillars are sometimes incised with geometrical patterns, and there are a few caryatids sculptured in wood. The creative efforts of the architects of Afin Akure was concentrated of the three dimensional composition of the palace. The many-levelled surface of the site was exploited with true virtuosity and perfect judgement in the composition of every courtyard of the Afin. The functional planning of this highly developed complex, as mentioned above, is characteristic of Yoruba compounds. This particular valor is evident not only in the neighbouring Edo country but in many other cultural areas of the country".

Fig 5.2a. Floor plan, Deji of Akure's Palace.

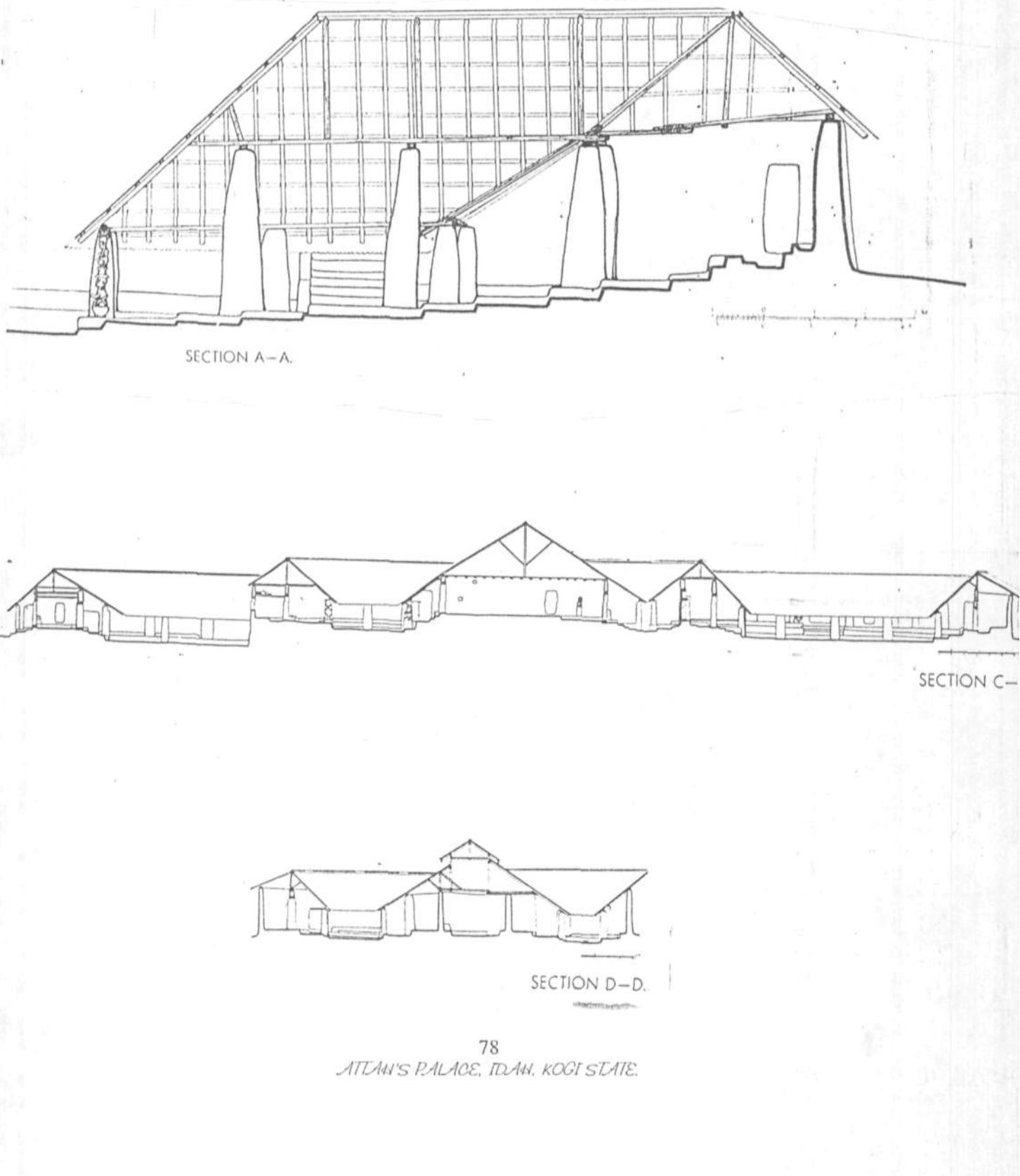
(Source: Dmochowski, Z.R. 1990)



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ATTAN'S PALACE, IDAH, KOGI STATE

Fig. 5.2b. Sections, Deji of Akure's Palace, Ondo State:

(Source: Dmochowski, Z.R. 1990)



Various courtyards in the Deji of Akure's Palace:

(Source: Dmochowski, Z.R. 1990)

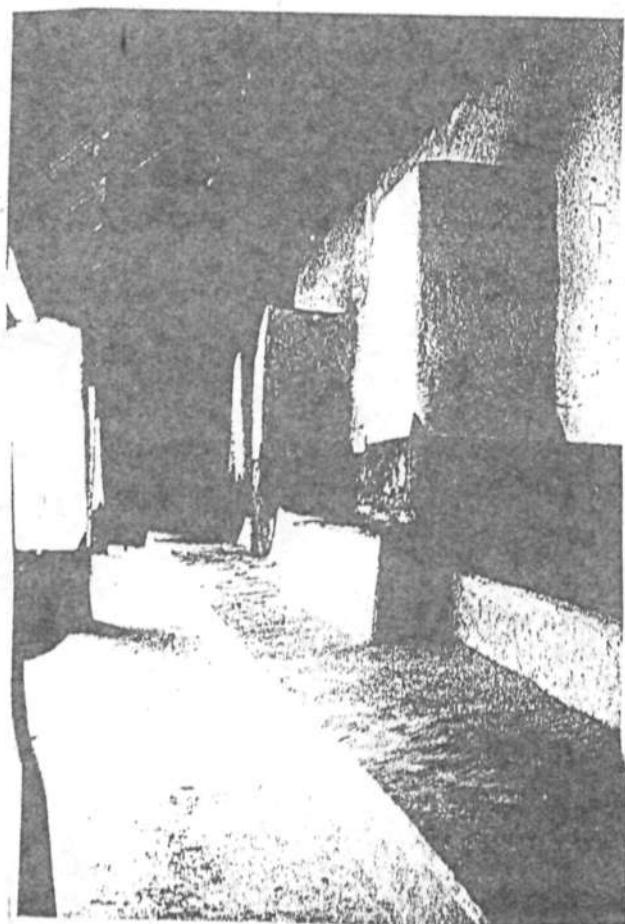
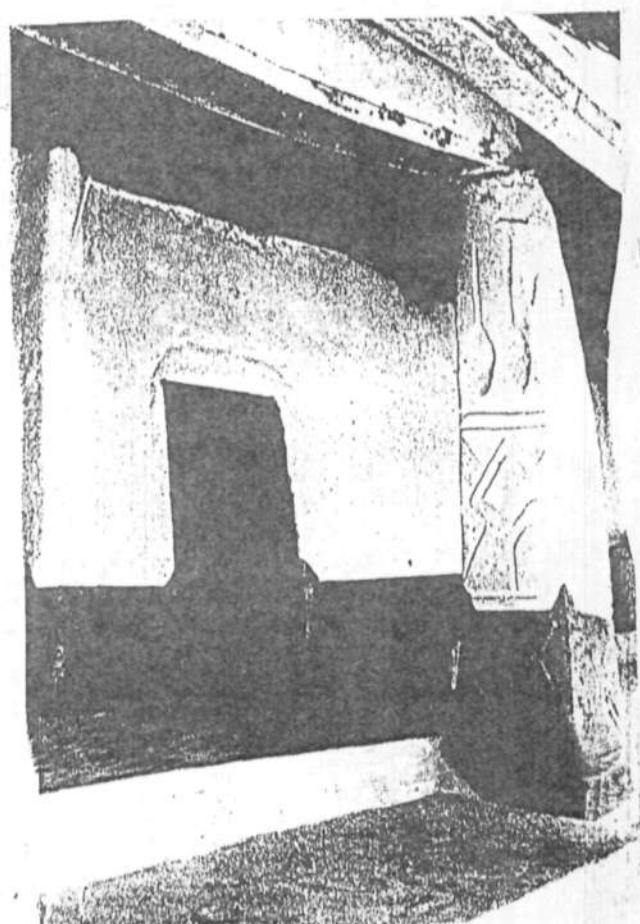


Plate 5.2a. & b. S.W corner of courtyard 5



S.E corner of courtyard 5

5.3 EMIR OF ZARIA'S PALACE, ZARIA, KADUNA STATE:

The Emir's palace in Zaria stands immediately beside and to the North East of the Massalaci Juma'a. Its entrance gate is on the West edge of a long open space reaching to the main street of the town and the market place nearby. Habe rulers who called it *Gidan Bakwa* originally built the palace.

During the following centuries, alterations and development of the palace undoubtedly took place.

The character of the old moulded decorations in the palace interiors showed a resemblance to the patterns used in the Massalaci, although the constructions were clearly linked with traditionally popular Habe/Hausa devices.

The plan of the great compound was also traditional, with a typical division into the main block of the Emir's residence and courtyards beyond it containing the dispersed dwellings of his wives, concubines and female servants.

Plate 5.3a. Details of roof constructions, decorations and archs:

(Source: Dmochowski, Z.R. 1990)

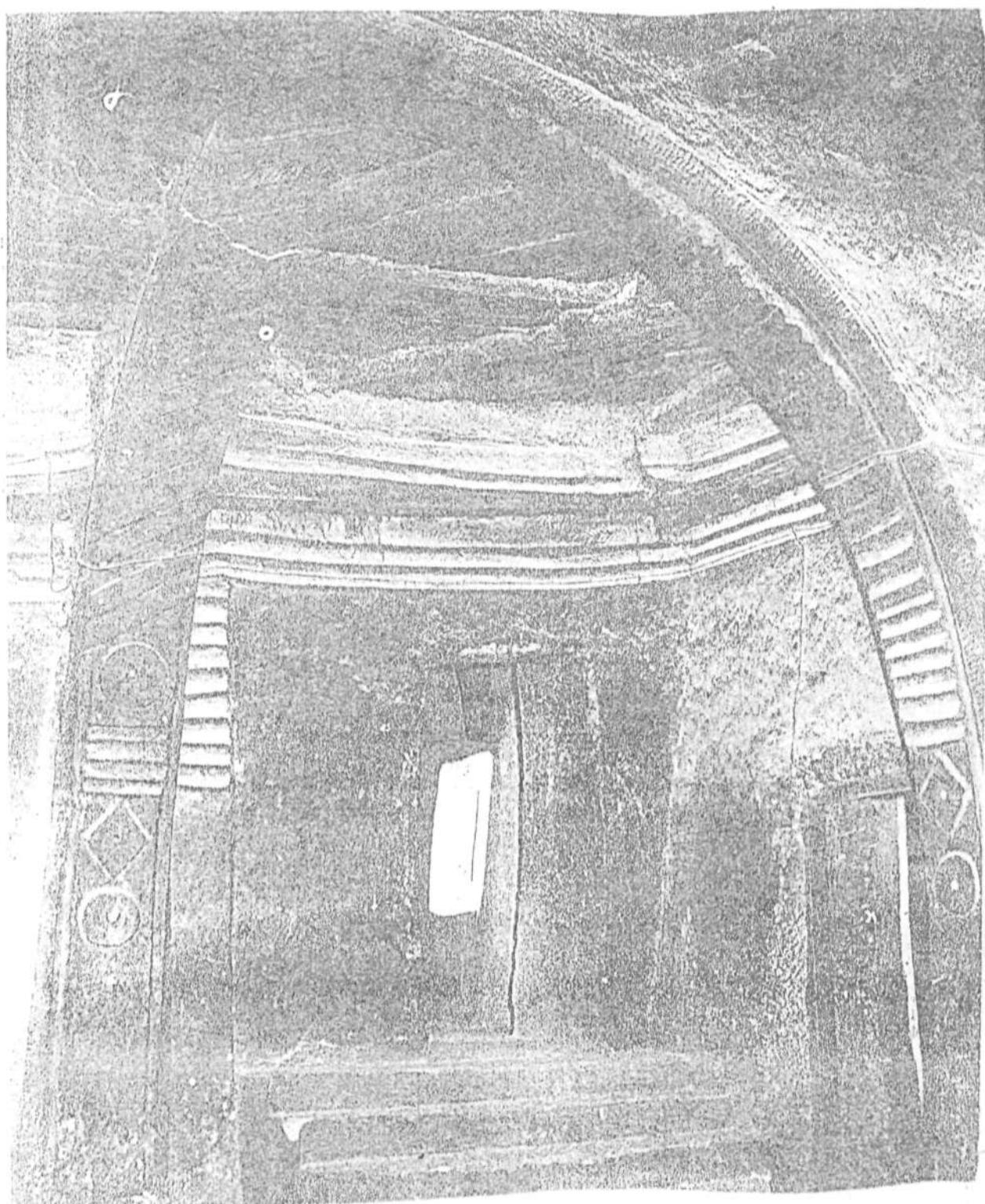


Plate 5.3b & c. Pictures of the emir's palace, Zaria. Approach to the Palace with the Mosque at the extreme right in plate 5.3c.

(Source: Field survey)

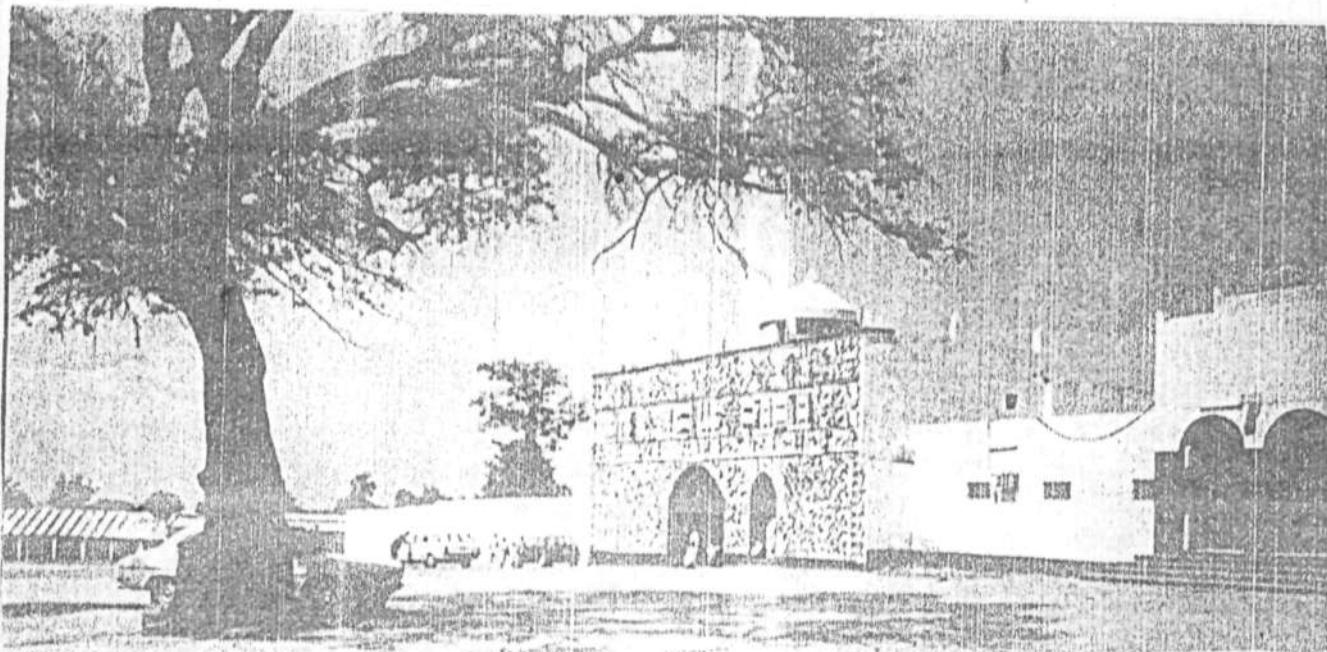


PLATE 5.3b



PLATE 5.3c

5.4. EMIR OF KANO'S PALACE, KANO STATE:

The Emir's Palace is called *Gidan Rumfa*. The palace was named after Sarki Mohammed Rumfa who built it during his reign (1463-99). He was the 20th Amir of Kano. According to B.N Ahmed (1980), analysis of the palace showed that the palace extends over 6hectres of land.

The palace consists of network of buildings. It is a town on its own. The City palace as it is being called forms a principal part of Kano. The palace has two major entrances popularly known as Kofar Kudu (Southern Entrance) and Kofar Arewa (Northern Entrance). The most expressive is the Kofar Kudu; this expresses the grandiose look of a palace entrance with a celebrated Grand stand that faces the dandali.

Hausa Traditional architecture is expressed in every aspect of this palace, examples are; the pinnacle, arch entrance, heavy massing, Verticality of the palace walls among others.

The palace also has numerous entrances called *Soros*. This numerous entrances into the palace shows the level of privacy, example; Public – semi-public and private.

5.4.1. Materials and construction

The palace symbolises an ultimate expression rich in Hausa traditional architecture. Because of modern influence of architecture, most of the buildings within the palace walls have been modified using modern building materials like concrete, tiles, paving stones etc. Though the traditional concept of privacy and other Hausa characteristics are still expressed. Places like the servant's quarters, Sarari Garke, Soron Mallam and

Fig. 5.4a. Floor plan of Emir of Kano's palace:

(Source: Dmochowski, Z.R, 1990)



other parts of the palace are still in their traditional form, especially the Northern part of the palace.

Emphasis are made mostly in interior decoration of ceilings, which are heavily ornamented, using double volume high ceiling wall vaulted ceiling. The ribs of the vaulted ceilings and their intersection are painted in abstract geometry. In different colours of red, gold, silver, black, blue, etc using mica particles. Tiles and paving

stones are used extensively on most modified buildings especially the Emir's private section, Mosques new court (Fada) among several other buildings scattered within the palace walls.

Conclusively, the power of this palace lies on its zoning, which is clearly defined to any outsider. The numerous zaures, (entrance), which are grand in size within the palace proves this point. The use of spaces is exaggerated in an extravagant way which symbolises wealth and power of the occupant. For privacy, the female occupants of the palace use the Kofar Arewa (Northern entrance).

Zoning of the palace was adequately done where the primary school, Police quarters, etc, could be seen from the first entrance that is the Kofar Kudu.

(Liberty, M.M. 1999)

5.4.2. Facilities

The facilities available in this great palace according to information gathered by the researcher on the field and from books are listed below:

- (i) Primary school
- (ii) Police quarters
- (iii) A modern complex (Majalisa)
- (iv) Guest house(Soron Baki)
- (v) Horse stables
- (vi) Garages
- (vii) Mosques
- (viii) Emir's resident (Gidan Sarki)
- (ix) Wives quarters (Gidan Mata)
- (x) Concubines (Gidan Kwarkwara)

- (xi) Cemetery (Shekar Gabas/Alama)
- (xii) Royal cemetery (Shekar Karofi)
- (xiii) Clinic (Asibiti)
- (xiv) Servants quarters
- (xv) Various Wards e.g. Nassarawa, Sokoto Beri-beri, Dakata etc.
- (xvi) Numerous courtyards and azures with different functions
- (xvii) Two grand stands-one above the entrance and the other on the extreme right hand side of Kofar kudu.
- (xviii) Administrative offices
- (xix) Soros.

See pictures of the various sections of this great palace below:



Plate 5.4a. *The new Mosque in the Emir's Palace. Note the use of interlocking paving stones as part of the landscape of the Palace.*

(Source: Field survey)

Plate 5.4b. A traditional building in the Emir of Kano's Palace finished with modern building materials. Note also the paving stones and the decorations on the walls.

(Source: Field survey)

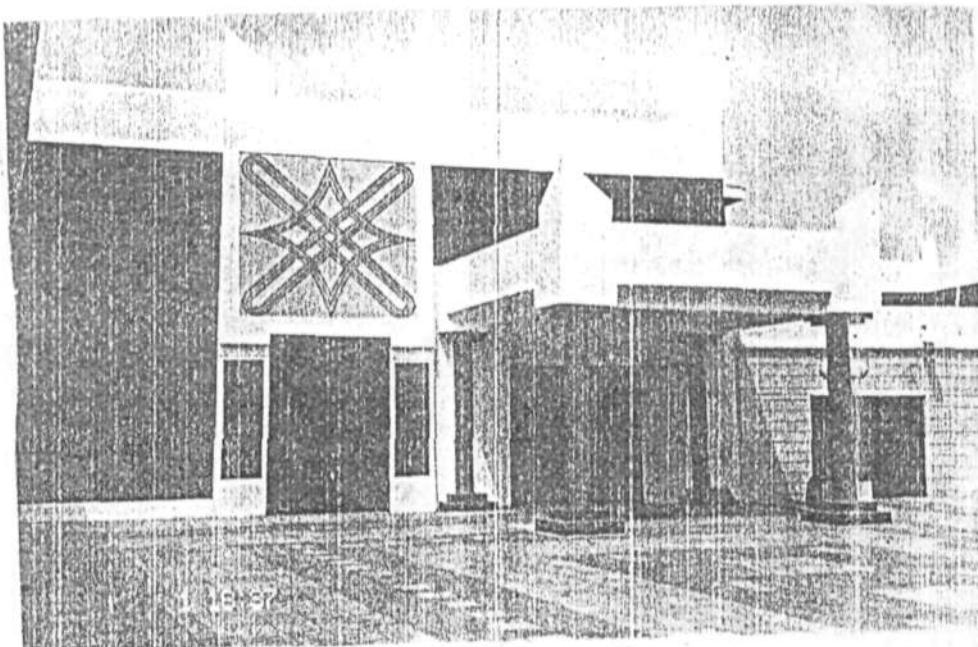


Plate 5.4c. Kofar Kudu.

(Main entrance gate into the Palace. (Source: Field survey).



5.5 THE ATTAH IGALA'S PALACE, IDAH, KOGI STATE:

The existing palace of the Attah Igala is located at Idah, the capital of the Igala kingdom. The palace from time immemorial is situated near the top of a most striking cliff on the bank of the River Niger.

The palace has served as the official residence of past Attahs and as the administrative arm of the Igala kingdom as already discussed in Chapter Two (Literature Review).

The present palace is in a state of decay as most facilities on site are either inadequate or in a state of collapse due to old age, lack of maintenance and inadequate spaces within the structures to accommodate the function it is used for. A description of structures available on site is given below:

a. The Attahs Residence. (Unyi Attah):

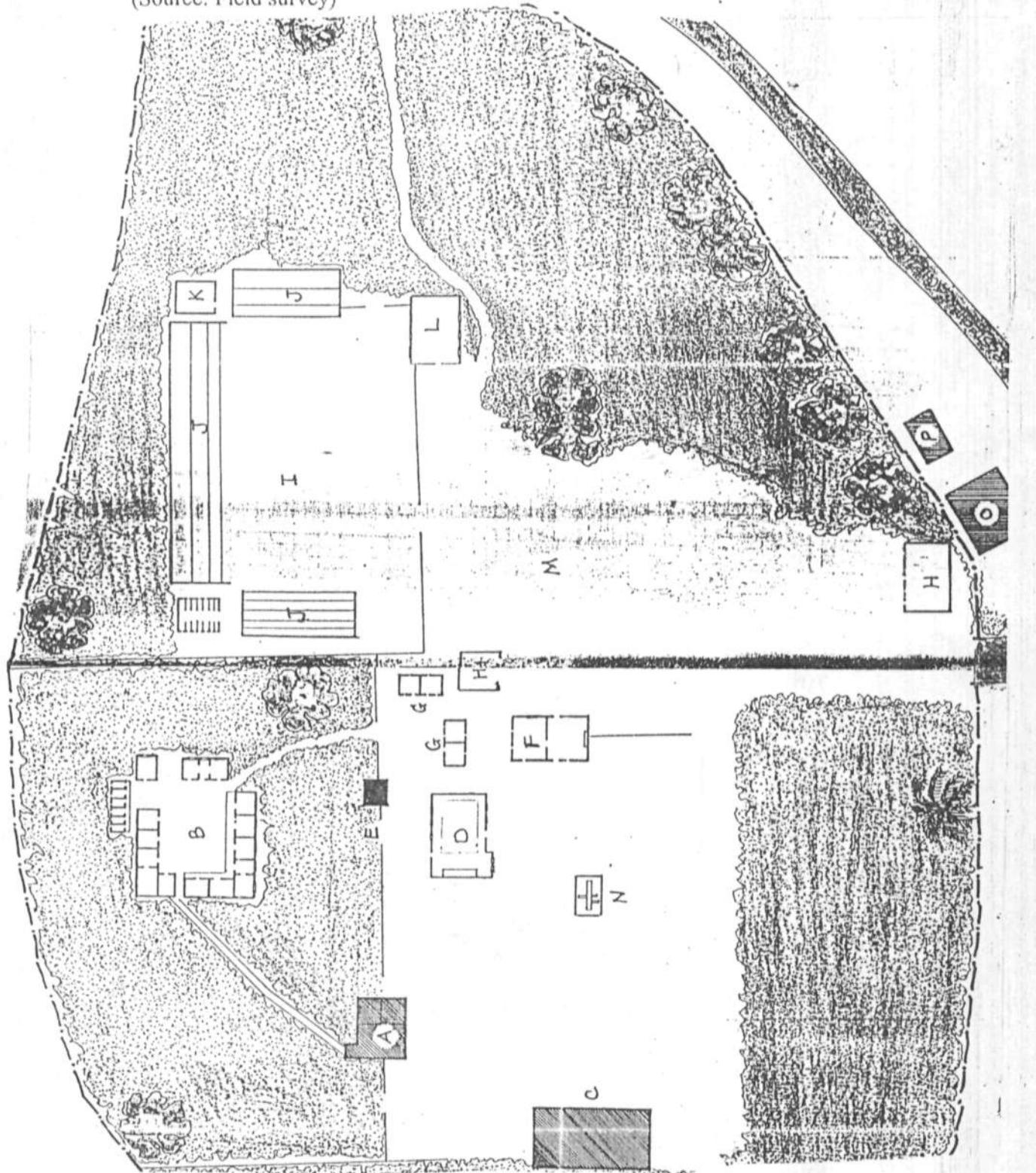
The Attahs' residence is an old duplex building that is in a state of disrepair. The Attah has requested for a new duplex, which will serve his needs adequately in terms of more space, more rooms, and an aesthetically pleasing residence for his status.

b. The Women Quarters (Unyi abobule):

The present structures housing the women is an old rectangular U-shaped mud structure with corrugated iron roofing sheets consisting of one-one room each for the wives of the Attah. The structures are old and lacked enough space for the Attahs' family.

Fig. 5.5a. Floor plan of the existing Palace of the Attah of Igala.

(Source: Field survey)



Discription of the Palace floor plan is as follows:

- A. Unyi Attah. (Attahs' Residence)
- B. Unyi Abobule. (Women quarters)
- C. Unyi Amononojo. (Guest house)
- D. Ogwede. (Audience hall)
- E. Odogo monument tower.
- F. Office of the Secretary, Igala Traditional Council.
- G. Unyi Amedibo. (Servants quarters)
- H. Garage.
- I. Ceremony ground
- J. Grand stand(s)
- K. Store
- L. Hall
- M. Parking
- N. Gun monument
- O. Over head tank
- P. Local Tax office.

All the women and children in the palace share facilities like kitchen, toilets and bathrooms. This has necessitated the Attah to ask for a completely new harem for the women and separate accommodation for the children of the palace.



ODOBO the 16th Century Tower and the oldest building in the palace grounds at Idah constructed of specially treated/stabilised and fired local lateritic earth. The present corrugated iron roofing at the top and surrounding midway down the tower is a modern day addition meant to protect the old structure from the rains. It serves several functions one of which is that when the roof is inverted that means that the incumbent Attah has gone to sleep with his forbears in the great beyond.

This imposing sentry tower at the centre of the Palace, according to Professor Ade Obayemi, Director-General of Nigerian Commission for Museums and Monuments, is the oldest storey building in Nigeria, that is, much older than the one at Badagry always referred to as such.

Plate 5.5

91A

c. Servants quarters (Unyi Amedibo):

Presently there are just four rooms for the servants of the palace and the rectangular mud buildings containing these rooms are located close to the Audience hall (Ogwede). The location of these buildings is an eye soar to every body visiting the palace, not only because the mud buildings are in bad shape, but because it does not fit into the place.

The other palace workers live outside the palace walls but very close to the palace to carry out their legitimate duties. The need to provide an adequate and a new servants quarter to cater for all palace servants need not be over-emphasized from the reasons given above.

d. Administrative Offices:

The only administrative unit in the palace is the old colonial building or hall which is divided into two halves and shared as an administrative arm of the Igala Traditional Council and a small audience court. The administrative unit houses all the staff of the palace among whom are:

- (i) Secretary Igala Traditional council
- (ii) Accountant
- (iii) Other clerical staff ,in a small space of about 4m x 5m (20m²).

e. ‘Ogwede’ (The Audience hall):

The present Audience hall is also an old colonial building built in the late 40’s. Apart from the fact that the building is old and needs replacement, it is also small in

size, it can sit about 40-45 people. It has no office for the Attah. It is just a hall for the purpose of receiving visitors to the palace.

f. Guest accommodation (Unyi Amononojo):

This wing of the palace is a new development. The Guest wing according to the Attah is adequate for his palace guest and would not require a new one since the building has just been completed. The building is of concrete construction with corrugated iron roofing sheet.

g. The Ceremony ground:

The ceremony ground is located just by the fence of the women quarters. This needs to be relocated in the new development because of noise filtering into the women's quarters from the ceremony ground. The Attah has also requested that the capacity or the stands of the ground be increased in the new re-development.

h. Council hall:

This old structure is located just in front of the ceremony ground. The hall was formerly used as the council hall of the palace, but now because of its state (damaged state), it is presently used to store benches and seats from the ceremony ground.

i. Attah's private garage:

This garage houses the Attahs private and official cars and it is located by the main entrance gate to the palace, very far from the Attahs residence and Audience hall.

j. 'Odogo':

This is regarded as the oldest building in the palace grounds. It is an ancient tower said to have been built in the 16th century. The building is a sacred place that serves as lookout for enemies or traders on the Niger and served other ceremonial purposes at the death and coronation of the Attah as discussed earlier in Chapter Three. The "present corrugated iron roofing" at the top and surrounding midway down the tower is a modern day addition to protect the old specially treated and stabilised earth construction.

k. Car parks:

There are no defined car parks within the palace at the moment.

Apart from the facilities listed above, the palace lacks the following:

- (a). Gatehouse for security checks,
- (b). Generator house in case of power failure,
- (c). Museum to house some important artefacts,
- (d). A defined Administrative area or building,
- (e). A horse stable for the Attah's horses,
- (f). Banquet hall, for cocktails and Luncheons

- (g). Conference room for meetings, since the Attah is the chairman Kogi state council of Traditional Rulers,
- (h). Attahs private office,
- (i). Defined accommodation for the Attahs children; as children share rooms with their mothers in the women quarters which is grossly inadequate.
- (j). No enough accommodation for palace servants, as 90% of them come from outside the palace everyday.
- (k). No defined building to serve as the general Reception area for proper guidance within the palace, as all buildings are scattered around without any coherent planning pattern.

The Attahs' palace summarily' lacked basic facilities of a befitting palace in terms of residential and administrative accommodation.

These reasons stated above, have necessitated a re-development proposal for the entire palace complex still maintaining the site of the palace (EFOFE) because of its historical background, being the site of the palace from time immemorial.

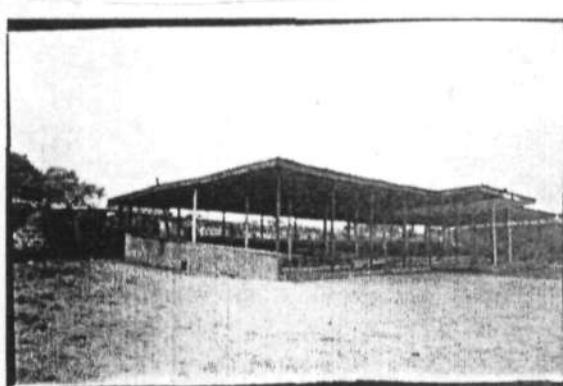
CONCLUSION:

The re-development of the Attah's palace would be done with inferences drawn from other existing palaces considered in this chapter of case studies. The palace would be designed to give the Igala people a feel of their culture and tradition and to restore their pride in the palace of their traditional and spiritual leader. A palace befitting the Attah's esteemed status would be evolved. And this would be achieved in the provision of adequate and basic infrastructures to cater for aspect of the palace.

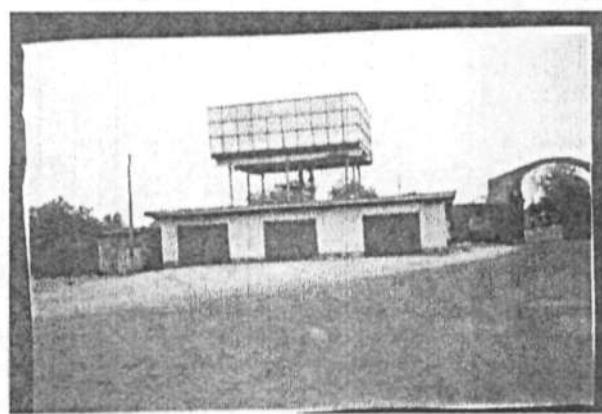
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Plate 5.5a. Pictures of existing structures in the Attah Igala's Palace at Idah.

(Source: Field survey).



Main Grand Stand



Main Garage



Main Entrance Gate

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURES IN THE ATTAH'S PALACE IDAH, KOGI STATE.

CHAPTER SIX

SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

Idah is situated on the east bank of the River Niger in the west central part of Idah Local Government Council area of Kogi State of Nigeria. At this point the Idah/Ankpa plateau meets the river valley creating areas of higher ground safe from periodic flooding. The area also affords a natural point for crossing the river Niger to Agenebode in Edo State on the western bank.

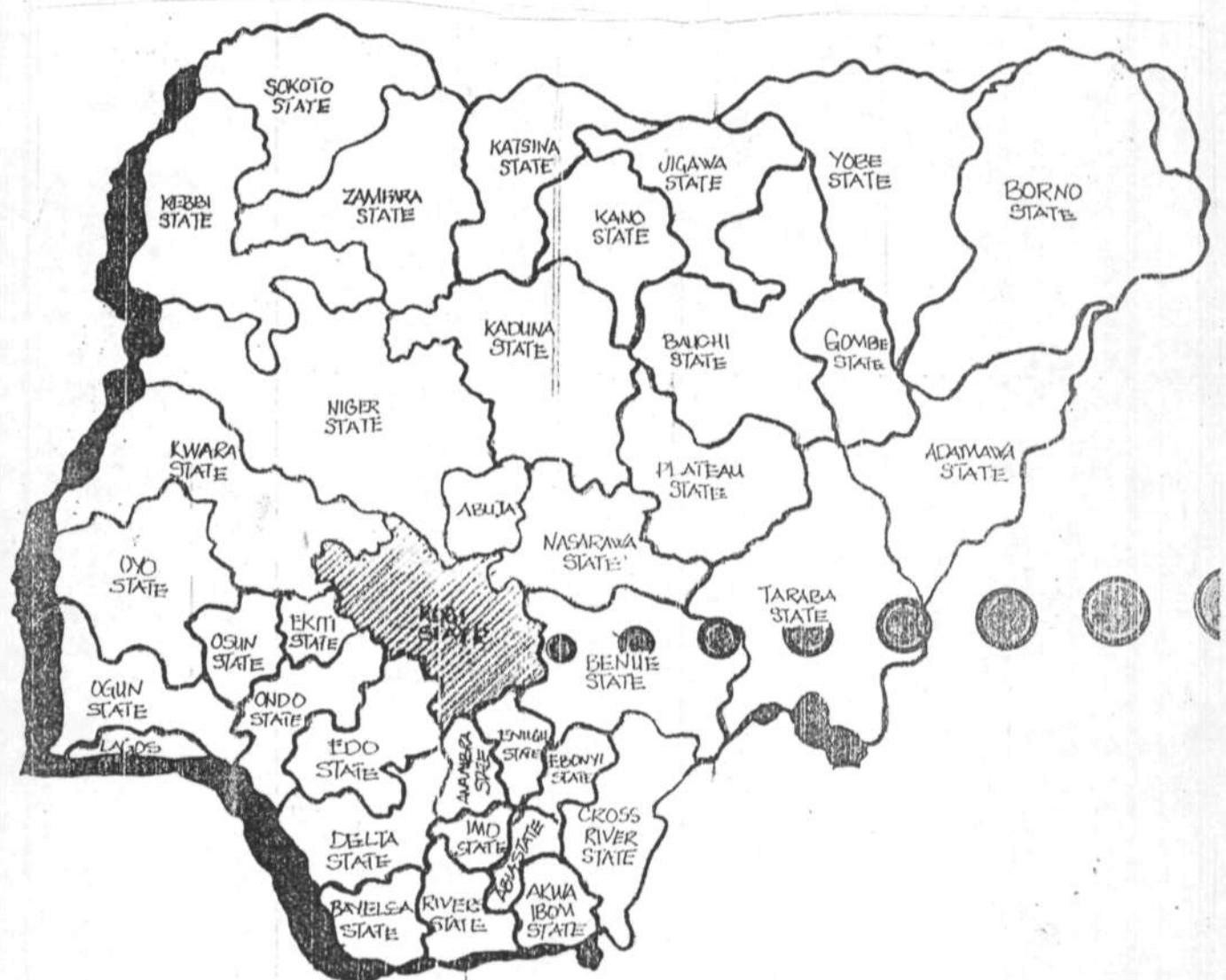
The town spreads eastwards in 3 main directions: northeast along the Ejule road, east along the Adoru road to the Inacholo stream, and southeast from the old town. Expansion to the south and north has been restrained by the possibility of river flooding and the teak forests located to the south of Idah.

Idah is one of the oldest settlements in Igala land, which according to oral traditions and judging by its location is estimated to be more than 800 years old. Idah town is regarded as the most important Igala town – the capital and the seat of the traditional king of the Igala people, the Attah Igala.

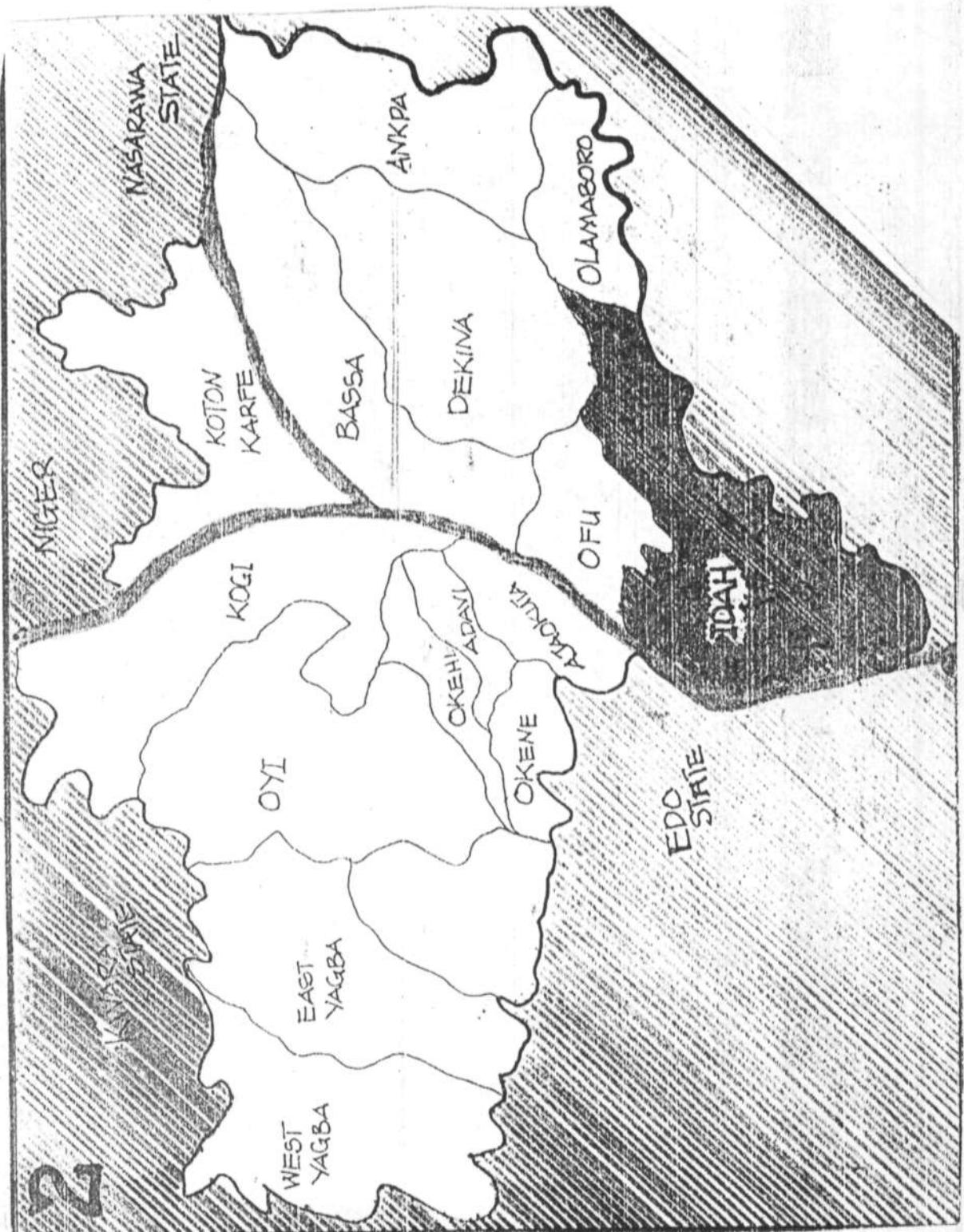
6.1 SITE DESCRIPTION:

The palace of the Attah Igala, which is called EFOFE at Idah, is said to be situated near the top of a most striking cliff on the bank of the Niger. The palace is located to the northwest along the main road leading to Ejule, and surrounded by residential buildings at all sides.

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MAP OF NIGERIA SHOWING THE POSITION OF KOGI STATE



MAP OF KOGI STATE SHOWING THE LOCATION OF IDAH

6.2 SITE ANALYSIS:

6.2.1 CLIMATIC DATA:

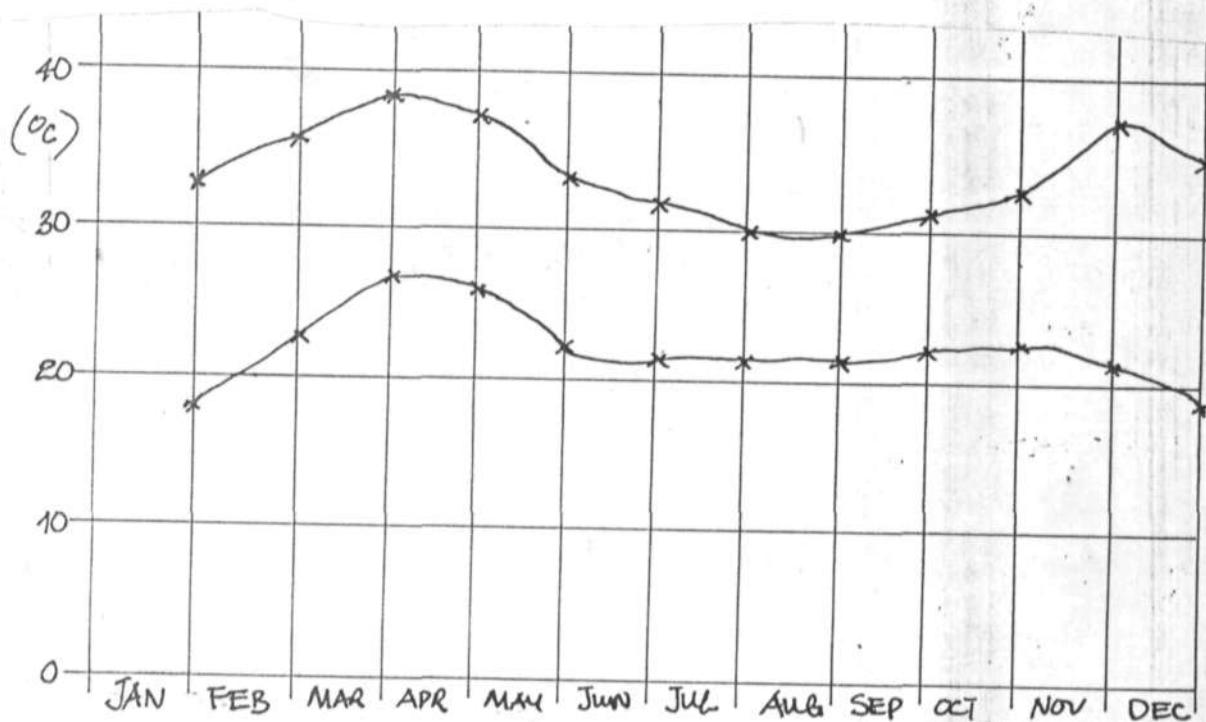
Idah town falls within the middle belt zone of the country Nigeria and in a climatic belt known as the guinea savannah. It experiences two main seasons; the wet season from March to October, and the dry season from November to early March. A specific type of prevailing wind characterizes each season. The wet seasons brings with it south-westerly wind originating from equatorial rain belt and blowing from the high-pressure zones which occurs over the attentive during their period. The dry season is accompanied by harmattan, a dust-laden wind blowing from the Sahara Desert.

A. Temperature:

The monthly mean temperatures are 33.7°C maximum and 22.7°C minimum. The hottest months are between mid-February and mid-April with temperatures soaring as high as 38.3°C maximum and 25.8°C minimum. The temperature graph shows that there is thermal discomfort throughout the year with temperature variations of up to 10°C on the average. The area of influence on design will be on thermal comfort, cooling installations, effect on joints, roofing types and openings.

See Temperature chart on the next page.

Fig. 6.2a. Temperature chart.

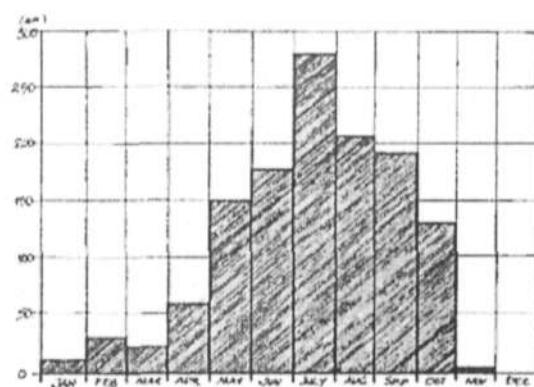


B. Rainfall:

The table of rainfall indicates the pattern of rainfall; the annual mean rainfall is recorded in June/August.

The area of influence on design will be on roof slope, efficient drainage of roof and site, break down of finishes and joints.

Fig. 6.2b. Rainfall chart.



C. Relative Humidity:

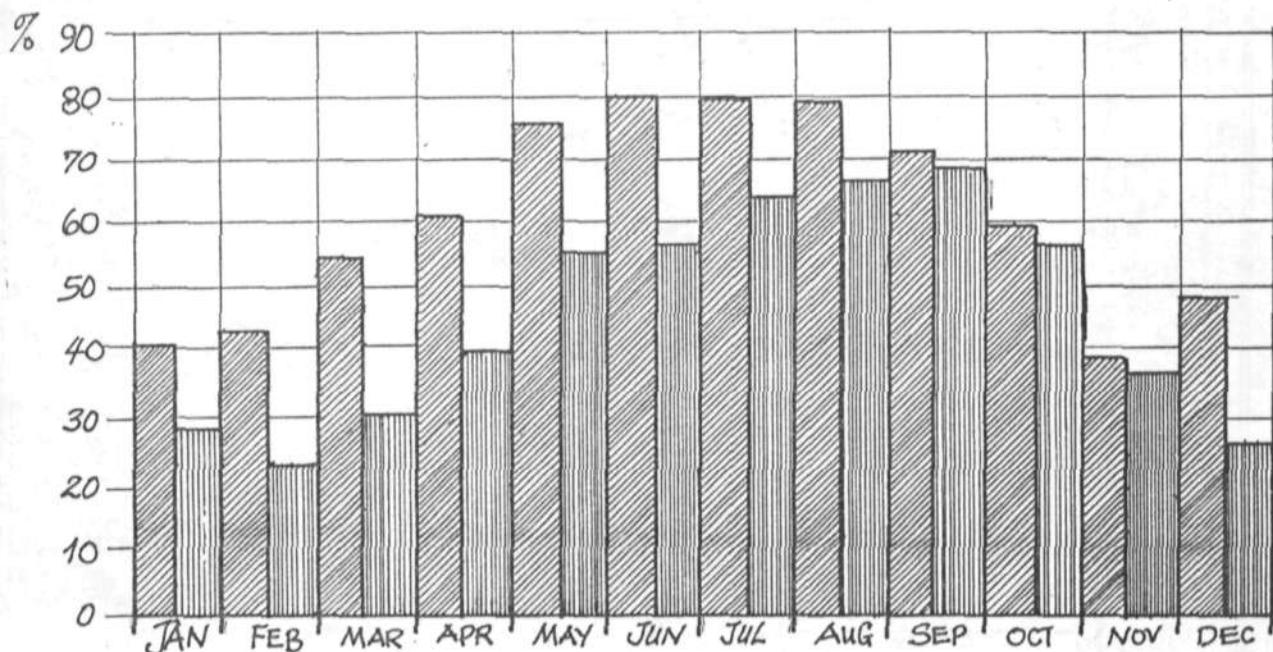
The relative humidity of the area falls as low as 21% during the dry season and rise as high as 81% during the rainy season.

The interplay of temperature and humidity factors determines how comfortable or otherwise the person involved would be. Comfortable relative humidity (30% - 70%) occurs in the months of April to June and October.

The possible influence of relative humidity on the design will be on the following areas:

- Ventilation, Cooling plant design and building materials, thermal insulation, landscape design.

Fig. 6.2c. Relative Humidity chart.



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D. Winds:

The wind flows are recorded from different directions, but the two most prevailing wind directions are; the North-east trade wind which brings the harmattan, a dry dust – laden wind blowing from the desert between the months of November and February while the south west trade wind which is humid in nature brings the cool breeze from Atlantic ocean between the months of March and October, the cool breeze brings about the rainfall.

E. Sunshine hours and Radiation:

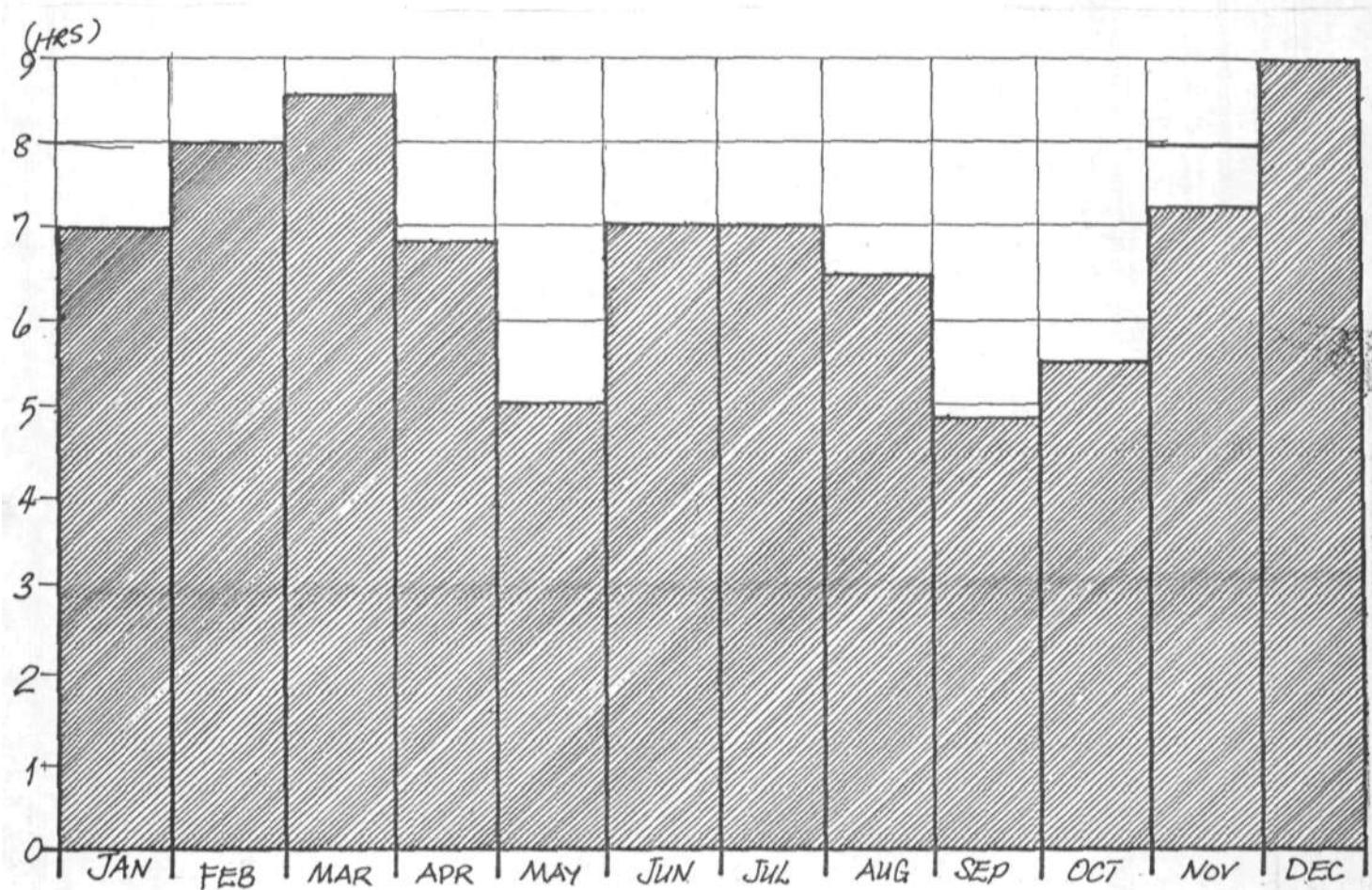
Idah town is on the tropic with a lot of sunshine. The hours of bright sunshine are greatest during the months of December, February and March but values decrease during the successive months. The average daily sunshine period is about 8 hours and the highest sunshine period is about 9 hours.

Solar radiation occurs more in the months of November, December, January, February and March while the lowest is in the months of May, September and October.

Glare effect is caused by radiation, from the aforementioned, the possible area of influence on the design are as follows:

- The wall Finishes, roof and wall materials, Thermal Comfort, shading device and its depth, Building orientation, and landscape planning.

Fig. 6.2e. Sunshine chart.



F. Hydrology:

The area of the town is underlain by a false-bedded sandstone formation, which could provide a source of ground water through the tapping of aquifers. However, adequate water supplies can be obtained from the River Niger and associated water Courses.

G. Soils and vegetation:

The area of Idah may be divided into 4 distinct soil types:

(i) High Lying soils of the Plateau:

These are shallow, sandy, residual soils subject to a good deal of erosion, especially on the sleeper slopes. It is advisable to build up the soil cover by planting vegetation to decrease the rate of erosion. These soils are suitable for construction.

(ii) Low Lying Soils of the Plateau:

These are medium to thick, sandy-clayey soils occupying the lower areas of the plateau. They are suitable for intensive cultivation and ground water can be obtained from the underlying sandstone.

(iii) Soils of the Forests:

These are extensive to the south of Idah and should be used for timber production.

(iv) Areas of exposed rocks:

The underlying rocks are exposed on the steep slopes at the edge of the plateau to the north of the town.

6.3 UTILITIES:

The Existence on the site of utilities such as an over head water tank to serve the palace and the whole Idah town, telephone poles and cables, Electrical cables from the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) would ensure adequate provision of services like air condition, lighting, communication and adequate water supply.

Due to rampant interruption of Power supply from NEPA, a stand-by generator is to be provided to ensure adequate and steady power supply to the palace in the event of power failure. Also, gate houses would be provided to ensure security of the palace, proper drainage channels shall also be provided within the palace walls and outside it to ensure proper drainage of the whole palace in the advent of heavy down pours since Idah is in a region of heavy rainfall.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 BRIEF DEVELOPMENT

The ultimate aim of this Thesis is a re-development of the Attah Igala's palace and to restore the palace to a leadership and cultural symbol and further designing befitting palatial environment for the Attah Igala.

The following have therefore been proposed as necessary infrastructure for a conducive palace:

- i. Residential areas,
- ii. Ceremony ground,
- iii. Administrative area,
- iv. 'Ogwede' (Attah's Reception hall)
- v. Servants quarters,
- vi. Museum,
- vii. Parking
- viii. Horse stable
- ix. Gate House,
- x. Generator house

These facilities listed above are further subdivided into smaller units depending on the functions performed by each, as shown below:

7.0.1 Residential area: This is broken down into four different sections as listed below:

- a. The Attahs residence (Unyi Attah)
- b. Women quarters (Unyi Abobule)

- c. Children quarters (Unyi Amom' Attah)
- d. Guest house (Unyi Amononojo)
- e. Servants Quarters (Amedibo)

Each section is further subdivided into its various units depending on their function as follows:

a. The Attahs Residence (Unyi Attah):

This is the personal residential quarter of the Attah. The building will be located in the semi private zone of the palace complex. This is composed of a public section; Living area, out door relaxation spaces and accommodation to make a private domain comprising:

- (i). General living room,
- (ii). Bedrooms for the Attahs personal aids
- (iii). Private sitting room
- (iv). Dinning, Kitchen and store,
- (v). Attahs Bedroom
- (vi). Study for the Attah
- (vii). Toilet and dressing facilities
- (viii). Strong room

b. Women quarters (Unyi Abobule):

These are the living accommodation for the Attahs wives who traditionally are forbidden to live in the same house with the Attah. The women quarters or 'Unyi

Abobule' would be located in such a way that they would be beside and facing the Attahs residence and facing the centrally located 'Atakpa' in the courtyard.

The design will provide accommodation for seven (7) wives. Each wife is to have her own private domain comprising:

- (i). Living room
- (ii). Bedrooms
- (iii). Kitchen
- (iv). Toilet facilities
- (v). Small courtyard, and shared facilities like; Laundry, Food storage room, Children play ground.

c. Children Apartment (Unyi Amom' Attah):

These are accommodations for the Attahs children and relations. Most of them not married and are of post- primary and secondary school age. The accommodation shall comprise:

- (i). Bedrooms
- (ii). Living rooms
- (iii). Kitchen
- (iv). Toilet facilities

d. Guest House (Unyi Amononojo):

There is an existing accommodation for palace guest already which the Attah says is adequate. This accommodation shall be retained in the new re-development proposal and shall be integrated to fit in the new design for the entire palace.

e. Servants quarters (Amedibo):

This section will provide accommodation for two categories of servants; The male servants and the female servants. The female servants shall be accommodated in the Women's section of the palace while the male servants will be located close to the Attah's Residence.

The male servants section shall contain accommodation for Two (2) messengers, Three (3) Bodyguards, Two (2) drivers and three (3) house boys. The accommodation for these people basically shall contain: Bedrooms, Living rooms, toilet facilities and open spaces. This is to cater for the married ones among them.

7.0.2 Ceremony Ground:

There is an existing ceremony ground on site except that it is poorly located, that is very close to the Harem about 2meters away. This will be re-located in the new re-development proposal and the capacity increased from the present existing capacity of about 800 to about 1500. The ceremony ground shall consist of covered stands for the public and a grand stand (V. I. P.) for the Attah and his important visitors to seat during occasion such as the yearly Egu festivals, celebrations, and Installation of a new Attah among others.

7.0.3 Administrative Wing:

- (a). Entrance Lobby: This will be the main entrance into the administrative area, it will also serve as a reception and enquiry area.
- (b). The Attah's Office: The office shall be spacious enough and shall have a private toilet for the Attah.
- (c). Secretary's Office: This office is for the Attah's personal secretary.
- (d). Secretary Igala Traditional Councils' Office: This office is for the Secretary Igala traditional Council, which will be located near the conference room for ease of administration.
- (e). General Office: This office will accommodate two computer analysts, Three clerks and Two messengers.
- (f). Conference Room: This hall or room would be used by the Secretary traditional council along side the Attah for any crucial meeting arising that concerns the welfare and well being of the Igala kingdom. This building is an existing building which presently houses the administrative arm of the palace as discussed earlier.
- (g). Banquet Hall: This hall shall accommodate about 120 guests, it shall have a royal entrance passage, a vestibule, a store and a kitchenette large enough to cater for guests in case of functions being held in the hall. The hall shall serve as a conference hall also to sit a large number of people in case of hosting other traditional rulers from the state since the Attah is the chairman of Kogi state council of traditional rulers.
- (h). Museum: This museum will be large enough to accommodate all Igala artefacts and antiquities. It shall be opened to the public. It shall also contain the following units: Royal entrance, Attahs' private collection room, Display Gallery, Reception area and photo or art exhibitions.

- (i). Toilet facilities: Toilet facilities will be provided for both male and female.
- (j). Waiting rooms: Waiting rooms of different categories shall be provided in the administrative area.

7.0.4 Ogwede (Audience Hall):

This is where the Attah seats in council to receive visitors, or seats on his throne. This will be accessible through the main reception hall. The Attahs personal office will be located close to this hall, and its also linked or accessible to the Attah's residence, the conference room and the various waiting rooms around it. The hall can accommodate about 120 people seated. The hall will also have a raised platform for the Attah and any other visiting Royal or chief executive.

7.0.5. Parking:

This shall be designed to accommodate about 50 cars and an undefined number within the compound.

7.1 SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION:

7.1.1. Attah's Residence (Unyi Attah):

S/No	Description of Space	Dimension	Area (m ²)	Unit
1	General sitting room	7 x 7	49	1
2	Private sitting room	5 x 6	30	1
3	Dinning	6 x 6	36	1
4	Okwute shrine room	6 x 8	48	1
5	Kitchen and store	6 x 4	24	1
6	Priest Bedroom	5 x 4.6	23	1
7	Private dinning/Sitting	6 x 6.5	39	1
8	Attahs bedroom	8.6 x 7.6	65.36	1
9	Toilets/dressing	8.6 x 3	25.8	1
10	Parking space			
	Study		30	1
	Balcony		25.5	1
	Stair well		22.1	1
	Strong room		24	1

7.1.2 Wives Section (Unyi Abobule):

S/No	Description of space	Dimension	Area (m ²)	Unit
1	Sitting room	9 x 6	54	1
2	Bedroom 1	5 x 4.6	23	1
3	Bedroom 2	4 x 4.4	17.6	2

4.	Kitchen	5 x 3.2	16	1
5	Courtyard	9 x 3	27	1
6	Toilet	2.6 x 2	5.2	2

Prototype 1:

S/No	Description of space	Dimension (m)	Area (m^2)	Unit
1	Sitting room	10 x 5	50	2
2	Bedroom (s) 1	5 x 4	20	2
3	Bedroom (s) 2	4 x 4	16	2
4	Kitchen	3.8 x 3	11.4	2
5	Courtyard	6 x 3.6	21.6	2
6	Toilets	2 x 2.8	5.6	2

Prototype 2:

S/No	Description of space	Dimension (m)	Area (m^2)	Unit
1	Sitting room	10 x 5	50	4
2	Bedroom (s) 1	5 x 4	20	4
3	Bedroom (s) 2	4 x 4	16	4
4	Kitchen	3.2 x 3	9.6	4
5	Courtyard	3 x 3	9	4
6	Toilets	2 x 2.8	5.6	4

7.1.3 Children section (Male):

S/No	Description of space	Dimension (m)	Area (m ²)	Unit
1	Sitting room	5.6 x 5	22.4	4
2	Bedrooms	4 x 4	16	8
3	Kitchen	3.4 x 3	10.2	4
4	Toilet	2.5 x 1.6	11.5	4
5	Bath	2.5 x 1.6	11.5	4

Children Section (Female):

S/No	Description of space	Dimension (m)	Area (m ²)	Unit
1	Sitting room	7 x 6	42	1
2	Bedrooms	4 x 4	16	4
3	Kitchen	3.4 x 3.2	10.88	1
4	Toilet	2.6 x 2	5.2	2

7.1.4 Servants quarters(Male):

S/No	Description of Space	Dimension (m ²)	Area (m ²)	Unit
1	Sitting room (s)	4 x 4	16	4
2	Bedroom (s)	4 x 3.6	14.4	4
3	Kitchen			
4	Toilets/Bathrooms	2.5 x 1.6	4	8

Servants quarters (Female):

S/No	Description of Space	Dimension (m ²)	Area (m ²)	Unit
1	Room (s)	3.6 x 3	10.8	4
2	Bedroom (s)			
3	Kitchen	2.6 x 3	7.8	1
4	Toilets/Bathrooms	2 x 1.2	2.4	2

7.1.5. Administrative Area:

S/No	Description of Space	Area (m ²)	Unit
1	General Entrance lobby/ Reception	258	1
2	Attah's Office/Toilet	49	1
3	Attah's Personal Secretary's office	23	1
4	Vestibule	90	1
5	Toilet Facilities	8	4
6	Banquet hall	210	1
7	Museum	280	1
8	Secretary I.T.C	24	1
9	Attah's Rest room	39	1
10	Council Chamber	119.68	1
11	Ogwede (Audience hall)	305	1
12	Waiting room 1	30	1
13	Waiting room 2	51.2	1

14	Reception to Attah's office	40	1
15	Kitchenette/ store	45	1
16	Royal Entrance	26.4) 2

OTHER FACILITIES PROVIDED INCLUDE:

S/No	Description of space	Dimension (m)	Area (m^2)	Unit
1	Ceremony Ground	Capacity is for 2500 people.		1
2	Parking lots	Capacity is for 44 cars		Several
3	Generator House	5 x 4	20	1
4	Gate House	4 x 4	16	1
5	Atakpa	16 x 10	160	1
6	Garage	18 x 7	126	2
7	Central Store	12 x 7.6	91.2	1
8	Horse stable	12 x 10	120	1
9	General kitchen	6 x 5	30	1
10	General Store	6.4 x 2.8	17.92	1
11	Kitchen yard	4.8 x 5	24	1
12	Grinding Room	5 x 4	20	1
13	Poultry House 1	6.8 x 4	27.2	1
14	Poultry House 2	5 x 3.4	17	1

7.2. PLANNING / CONCEPT:

In designing a palace, a lot has to be taken into considerations; such as , the position of the Traditional ruler as the spiritual head of his clan. Another major factor to be considered is his position as the custodian of the peoples' culture and tradition.

At the planning stage, the palace should be designed to reflect the peoples traditional pattern of compound layout, spaces to be allocated to various functions should be adequate and exaggerated to suit palace design.

The approach to the planning/concept of this palace (The Attah's' palace) has been derived from the Attah's' symbol of power and authority, which is one of the most important item in the Royal Regalia, The '**EJUBEJUAILO MASK**' .



Werner Forman Archive/British Museum/Art Resource, NY

Plate 7.2a. THE EJUBEJUAILO MASK.

(Source: Microsoft Encyclopaedia Encarta 2000)

The mask, which is a gift from the Oba Benin in the late 15th century' has become part and parcel of the Igala kingship culture and tradition and has been accepted by all Igala sons and daughters as one of the most important single item in the Royal Regalia and part of their culture since then.

Ejubejuailo could be interpreted literally as "The fierce countenance" and it is a distinctive and beautiful pectoral brass mask.

The past Attah's wore the mask on their faces so as to shield their faces from mere mortals, the public, since the Attahs were then referred to as "gods". Hence the name 'Ejubejuailo' the fierce countenance or 'the eye that scares the eyes. That

demonstrates then the supreme nature of the Attah or of him being referred to as a god.

Plate 7.2b. The Ejubejuailo mask (Adopted as design concept).



Modernisation and social changes has reduced the wearing of the mask on the chest now by the Attah in all his public outings.

The planning aspect of this royal palace using the Ejubejuailo mask has been zoned into public area and private area.

The public area, which is the masks' lower part (beard, nose and mouth) comprises the following:

- (i) The main entrance hall/reception,
- (ii) The Banquet hall
- (iii) The Museum
- (iv) Two (2) waiting rooms
- (v) Ogwede (Attahs' Audience hall)
- (vi) Attahs' office and his aids,
- (vii) The nose of the mask takes the Conference hall ("Anyi Oluka"), the Secretary Igala Traditional council's office General office, Attahs rest room and conveniences.

The upper part of the mask comprises of the following:

- (i) The Attahs private residence (Unyi Attah)
- (ii) The women Residence (Unyi Abobule)
- (iii) Private garages for cars on both wings, representing the masks projection just above the ears,
- (iv) Large parking spaces representing the masks ears,
- (xi) The Atakpa (common lounge for the family in the middle of the compound representing the masks fore head',
- (xii) The "Odogo" tower representing one of the masks eyeballs and a tree planted at the opposite side of the tower representing the second eyeball of the mask.

Basically, this is the planning concept of the palace and it still reflects the Igala planning pattern of having the Atakpa centrally located and planning sleeping quarters round it and having their openings in form of doors and windows facing the Atakpa. The reason for this as earlier explained in Chapter Four, is to see who comes into the

compound and is expected to walk to the Atakpa, being the reception hall of every Igala compound.

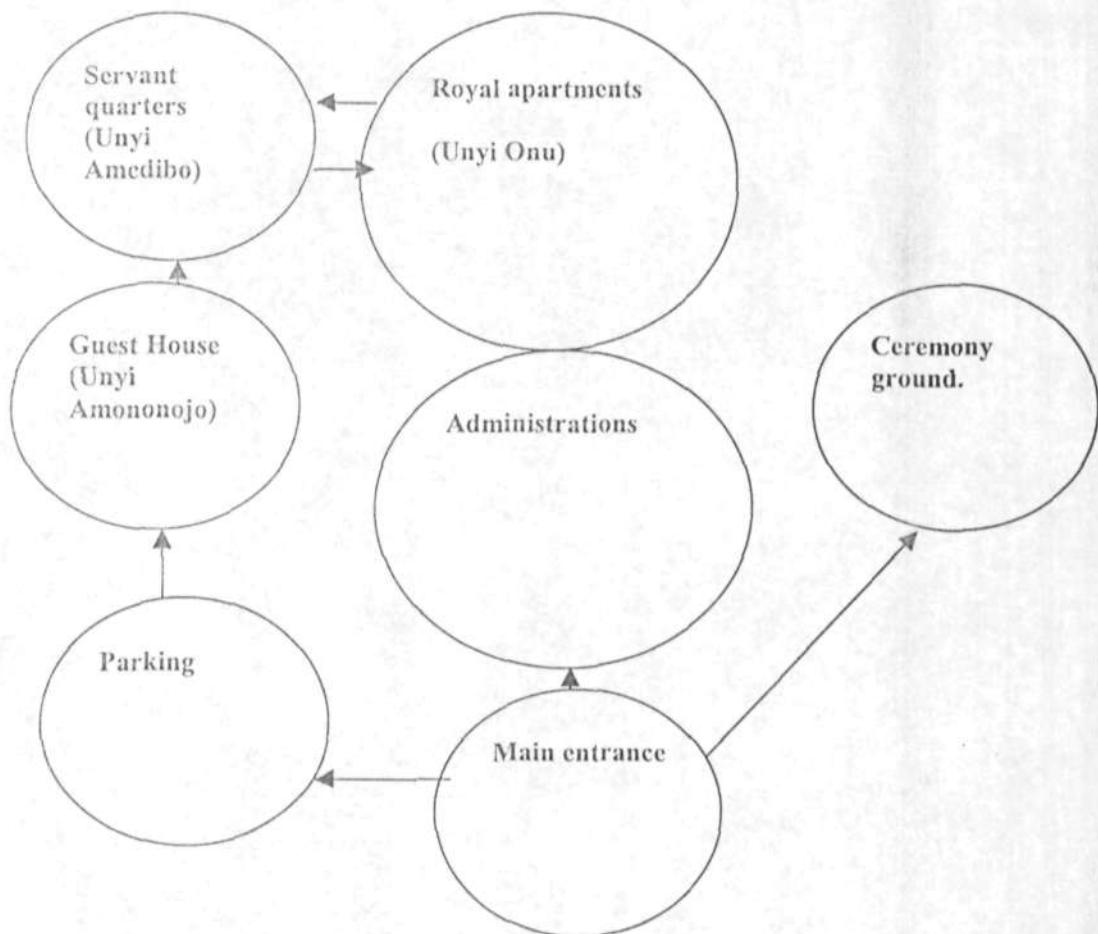
7.3. SITE ZONING:

The entire site of the palace has been zoned broadly into two:

(a). **The public zone**, which comprises the following:

- (i) The public parking area
- (ii) The ceremony ground
- (iii) The administrative area
- (iv) The Banquet hall
- (v) The museum
- (vi) The Audience hall.

SITE ZONNING CONCEPT BASED ON CIRCULATION



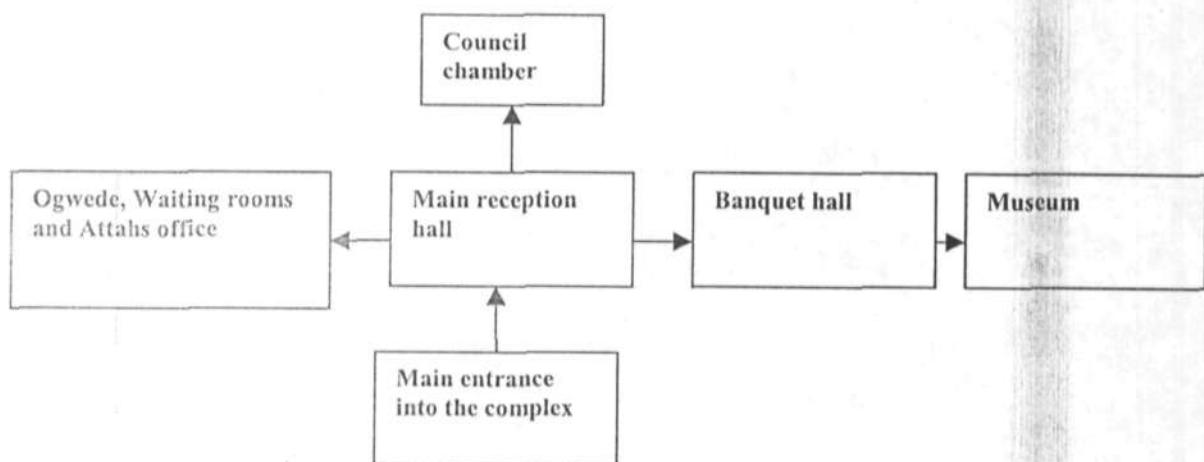
(b). The private zone, which comprises the following:

- (i) The Attahs residence,
- (ii) The women quarters
- (iii) Other residential quarters within the palace walls.

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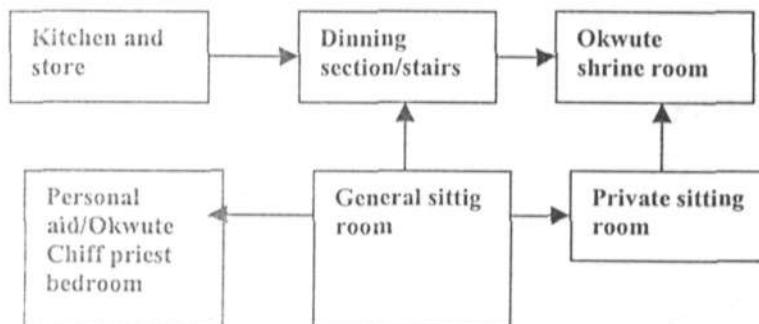
7.4 FUNCTIONAL FLOW DIAGRAMS.

a. Administrative block:

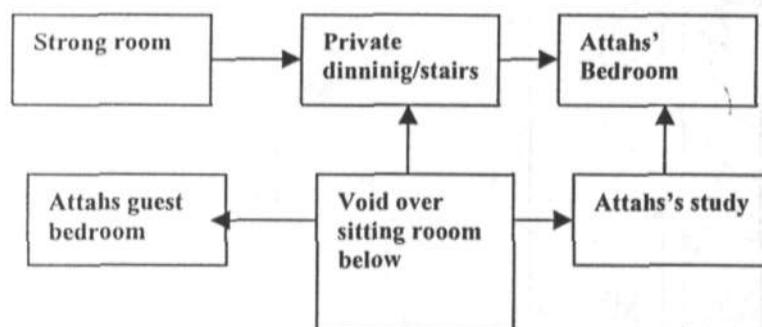


b. Unyi Attah (Attahs' residence):

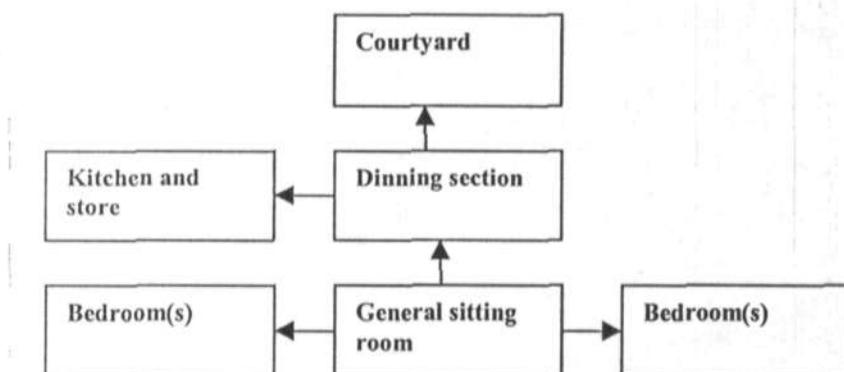
(Ground floor plan)



Unyi Attah. (First floor plan)



c. Unyi Abobule (Women quarters) .Typical.



7.5 MATERIAL AND TECHNOLOGY:

The design of the palace is a combination of semi-circular form and that of rectangular form. The semi circular form was adopted not only to maintain the form of the Ejubejuailo mask, but because the form provides ample spaces that can be partitioned into many other spaces. The semi circular form is also borrowed from the Igala's round hut construction techniques.

Some part of the structure is roofed with reinforced concrete slabs especially the corridors to serve as gutters for the collection of storm water for onward transfer through drain pipes to the drainage on the ground around the palace and channelled to

the public drain outside the palace walls. While steel trusses are used in roofing the other parts of the semi circle. Aluminium roofing sheets are used to roof the entire palace complex except for the poultry and the horse stable sections.

The design is basically of modern concrete construction as red-mud or red building earth has structural limitations and thatch roofs cannot be used over such spans. Also the use of landscaping elements such as trees, shrubs, good lawn of grasses, connecting walkways, sculptures in strategic locations have been introduced within the palace to improve the thermal comfort, reduce wind effect, provide shade against direct sun rays and to also serve as buffer zone against noise from various sources, such as; car horns and noise from the ceremony ground to the residential areas.

7.6 FINISHES:

(a) **Foundations:** All buildings within the palace complex would be of concrete strip foundation, of not less than 500mm below ground level.

(b) **Floors:** The floors of the Audience hall, Reception lobby, Attahs office, Banquet hall, Museum, Council chamber would be finished in 20mm thick granite slabs. Some of these spaces mentioned above like the Attahs office, Audience hall, Banquet hall and Council chamber would be covered with red Oriental rugs of various design patterns. The residential quarters floor shall be finished in high

quality cement screed finish with p.v.c tiles laid on the floor, and rugged accordingly.

(c) Walls and Columns: Depending on the location of interior walls and columns, decorative pattern of various forms, motifs and reliefs would be created on walls and columns to symbolise power and grandeur of the Attahs' palace.

(d) Ceilings: Various decorative ceiling boards would be used depending on the interior. These ceilings shall vary in height and decorations also.

(e) Openings: Most windows and doors to be used would be purpose made to suite various sections and this would be finished in glass, aluminium and wood as the case may be.

(f) Roofing: The semi-circular part shall be roofed with steel trusses (monopitch) using aluminium-roofing sheets of .7mm thickness. All other roofs shall consist of timber trusses with aluminium roofing sheets except the poultry section and horse stable that would be roofed with corrugated zinc.

(g) Skirting: Skirting shall be of terrazzo, granite and high quality wood depending on location.

(h) Elevations: The approach elevation displays to the observer a crown concept, which is a reflection of

the 'Ikelekwu Ahuma mask (one of the nine royal masks of the Attah), and the 'Ejubejuailo mask. The approach elevation also gives the impression of the King seating in the middle and his royal subjects flanking by the sides, left and right. This shall be finished in high quality emulsion paint and brick facing used in some parts as motifs on the wall.

7.7 CONCLUSION:

The use of scale and proportion, the exaggeration of sizes of spaces, which are typical of all royal palaces have been duly applied in this design to achieve the ultimate goal of designing a palace which could be identified as being the Igala palace. The combination of the concept of the Ejubejuailo and the Ikelekwu Ahuma masks in evolving a design for the Attah is most suited for the Igala identity.

The design of the palace to the best of the researchers knowledge will restore pride and confidence in the Igala people towards their Attahs' palace. The palace design expresses Power, Grandeur, simplicity and befitting considering the Attahs status in Kogi state in particular and the country in general.

This work has been done in line with documenting Igala Traditional Architecture, which will serve as a reference material for present and future generations of users.

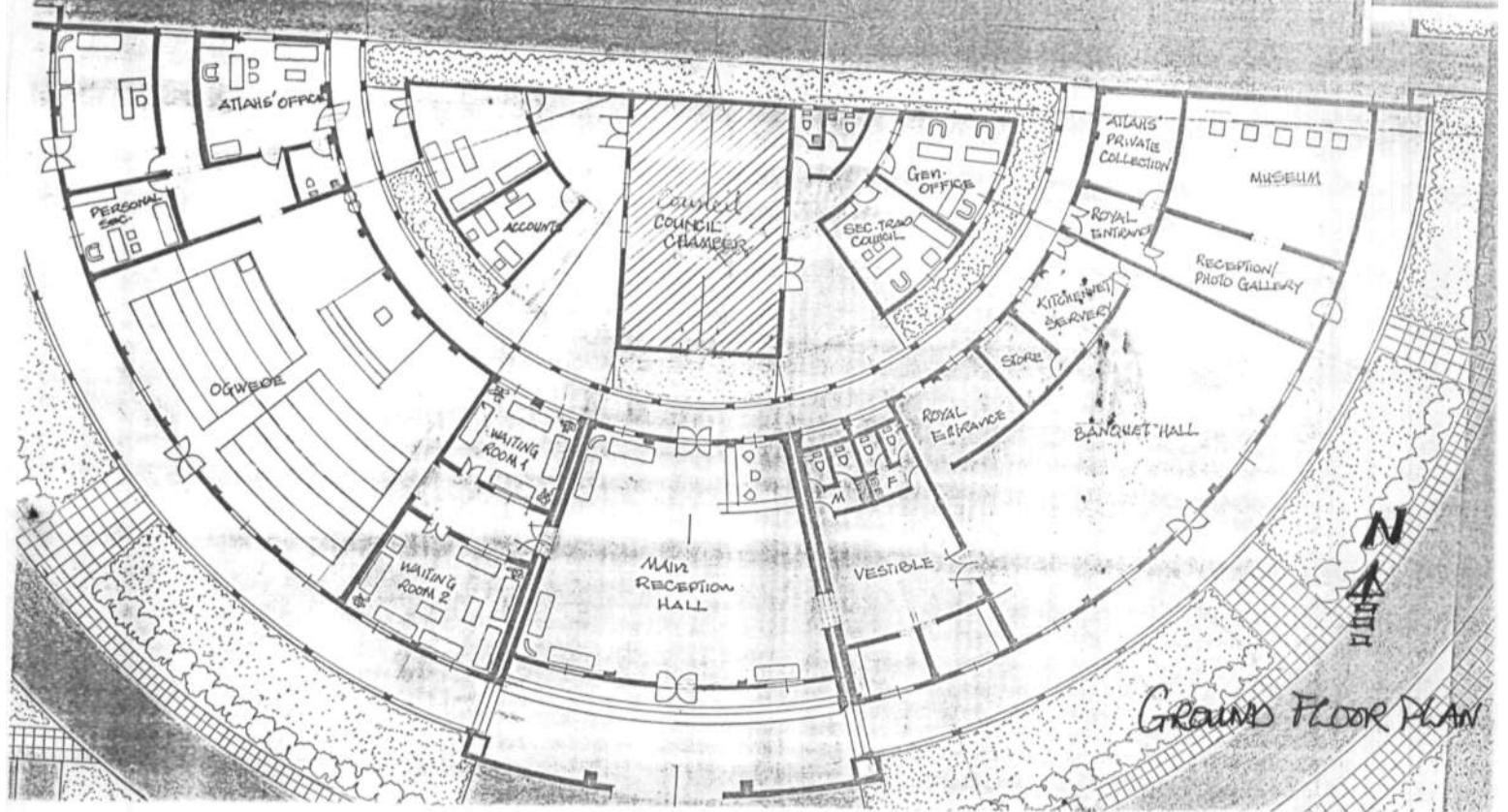
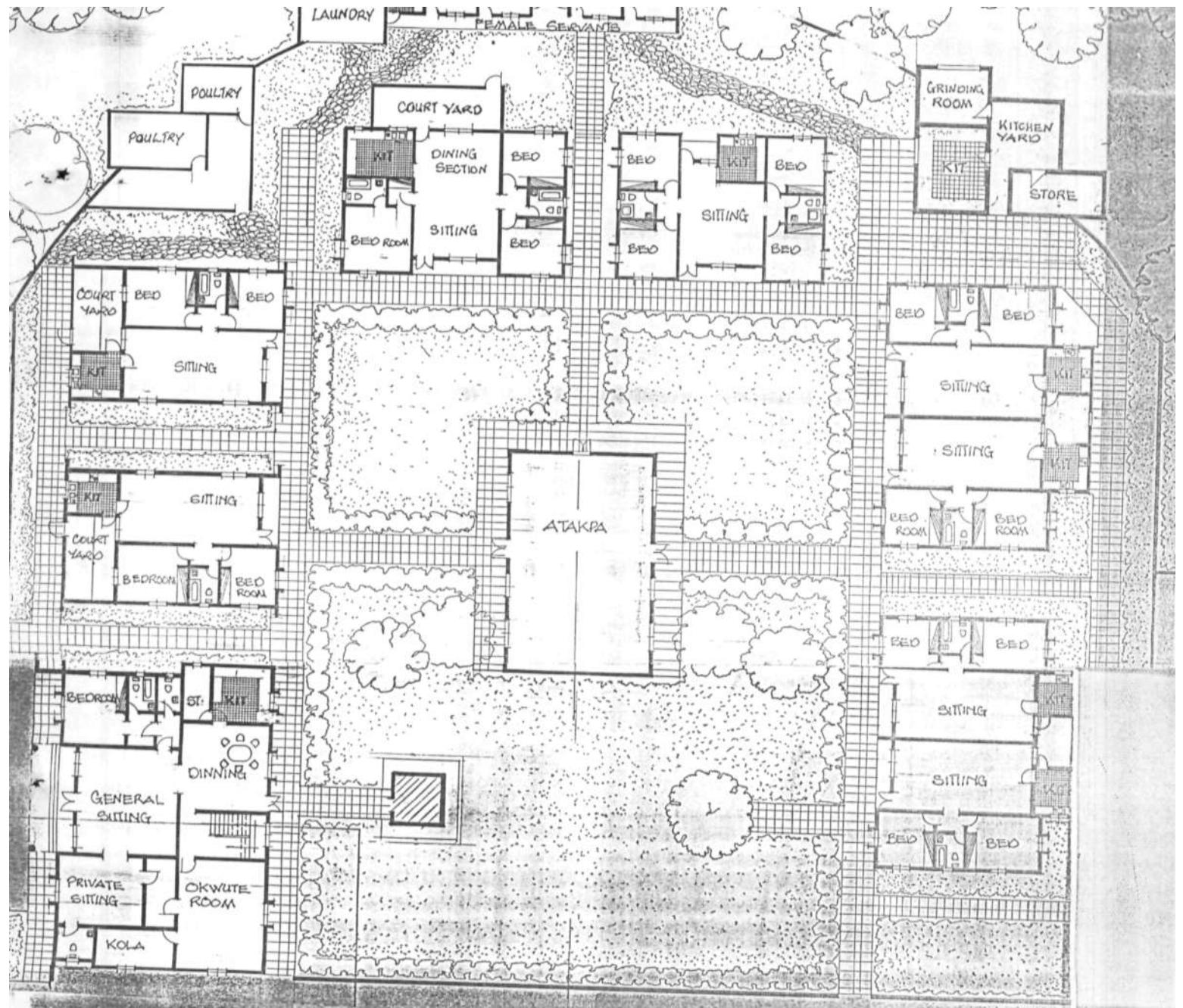
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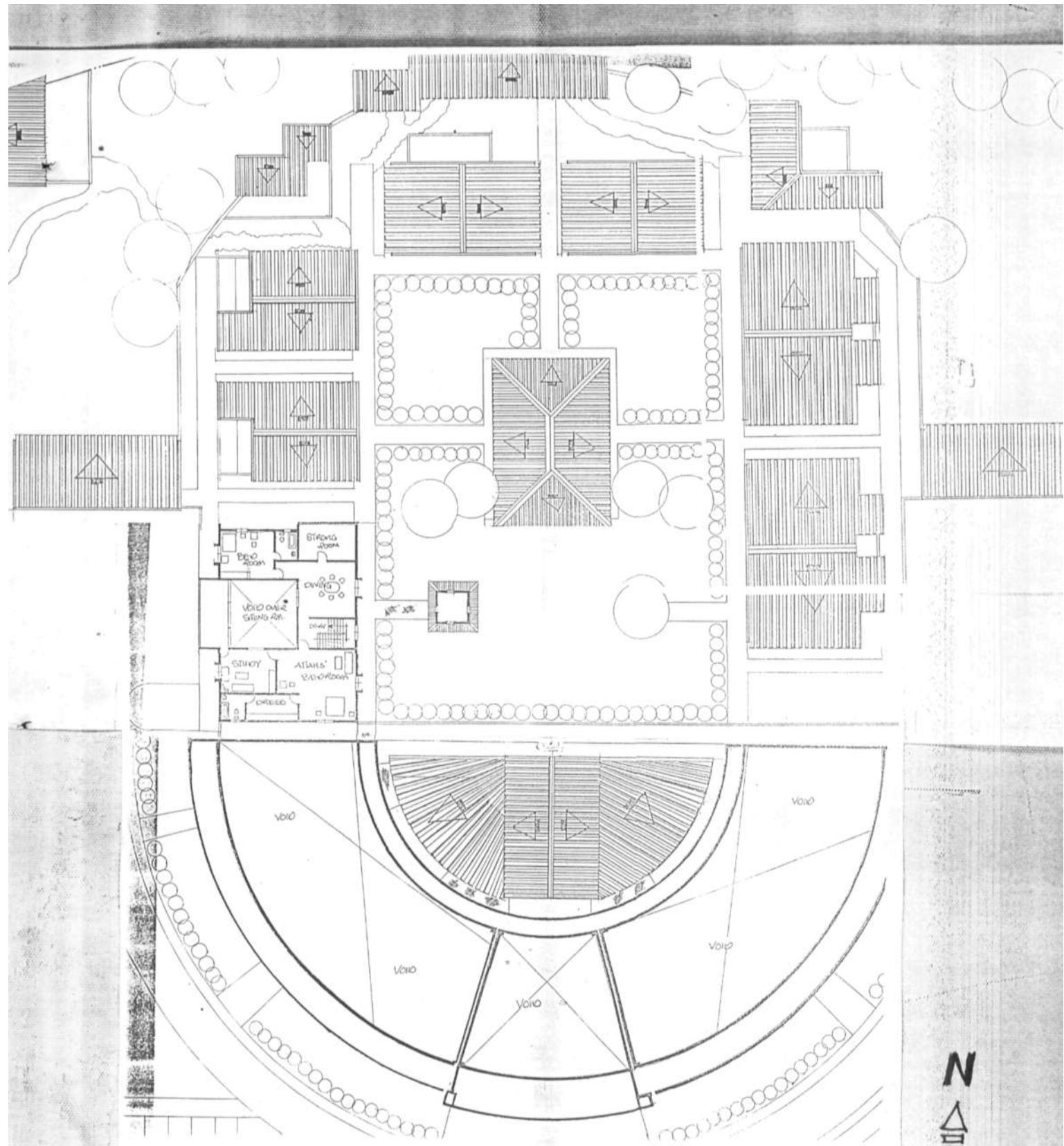
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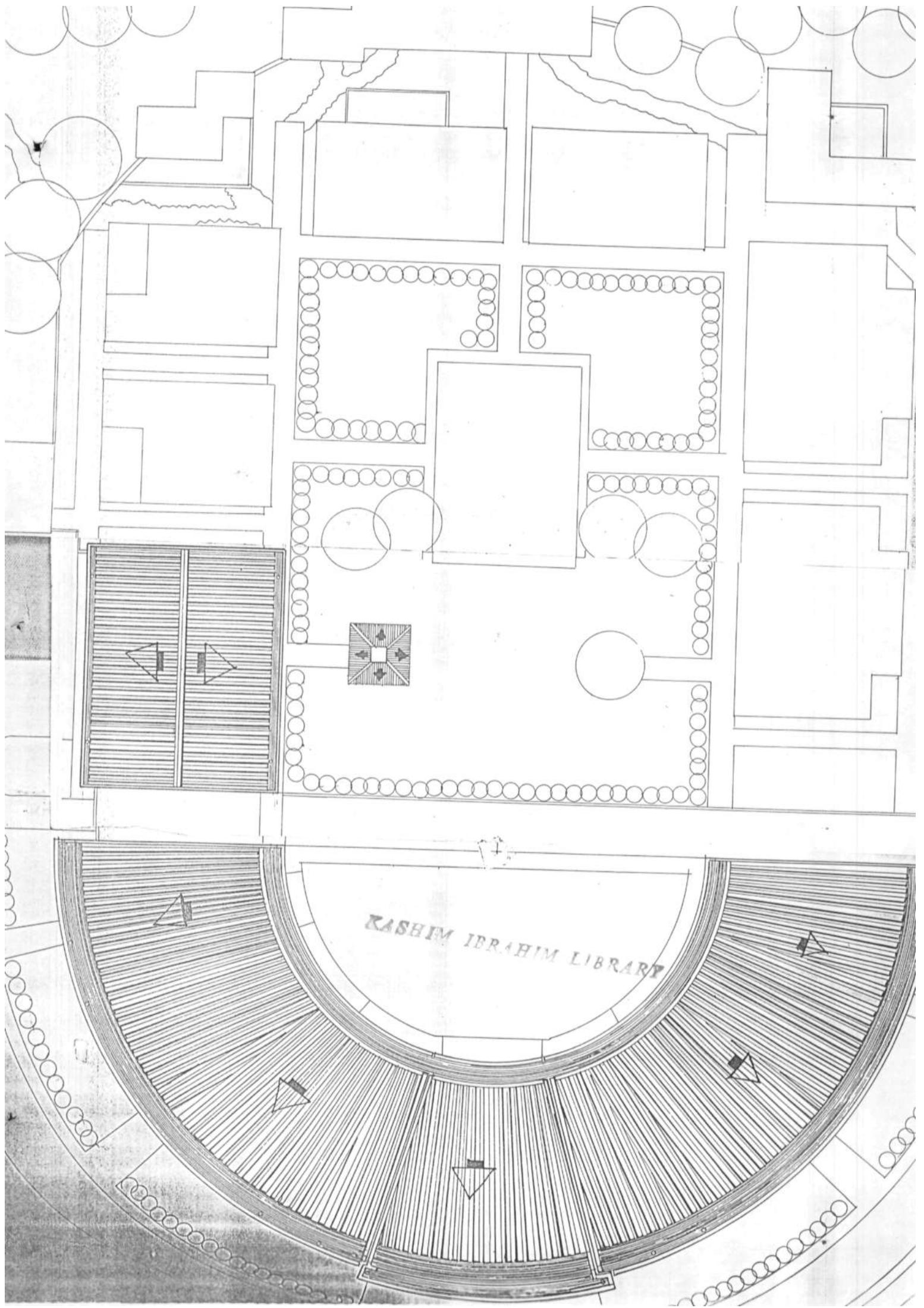


GROUND FLOOR PLAN

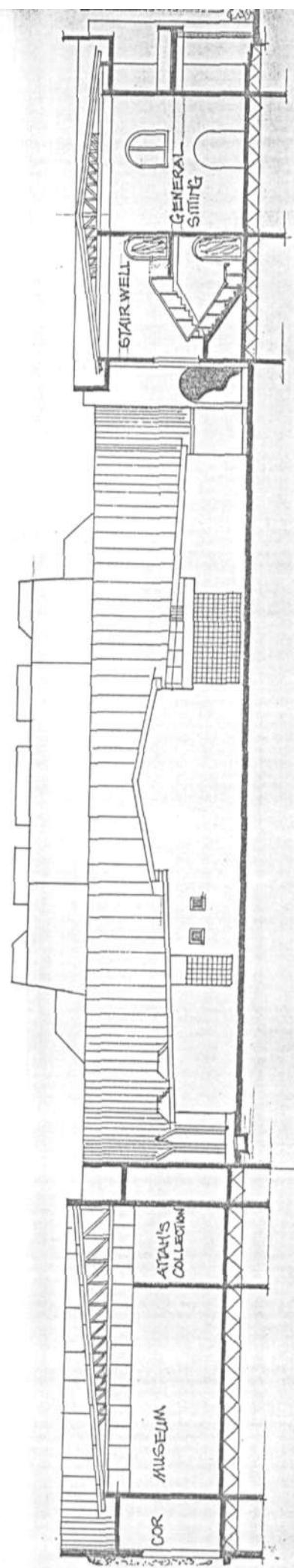


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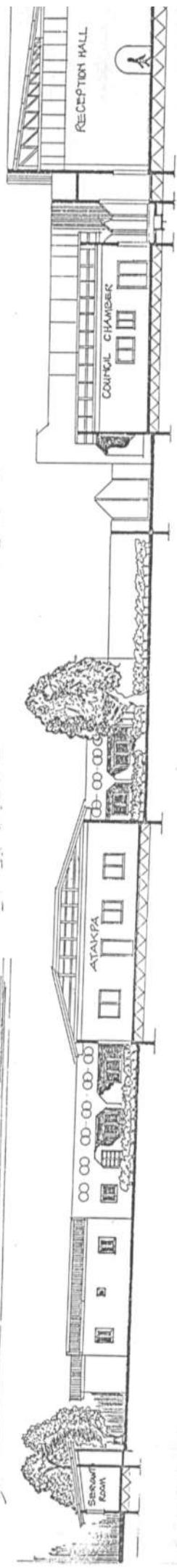


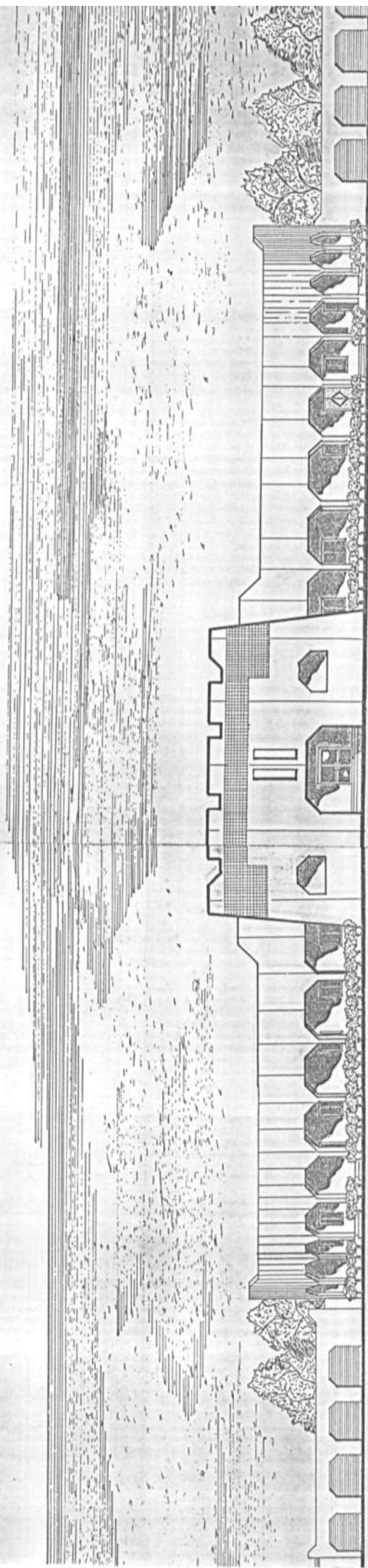
SECTION - D-D



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Section a-a



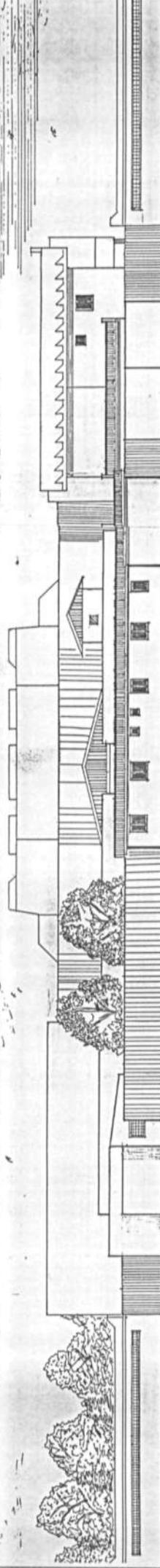


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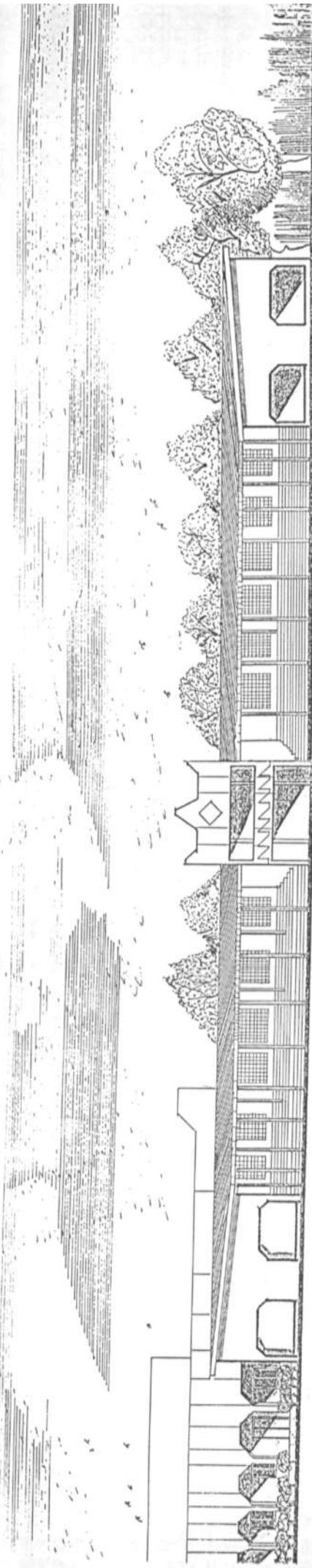


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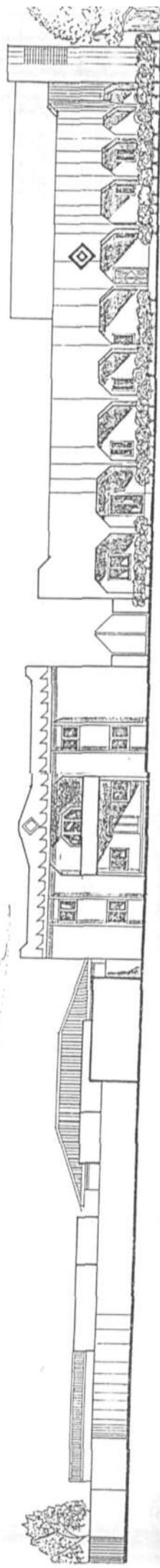


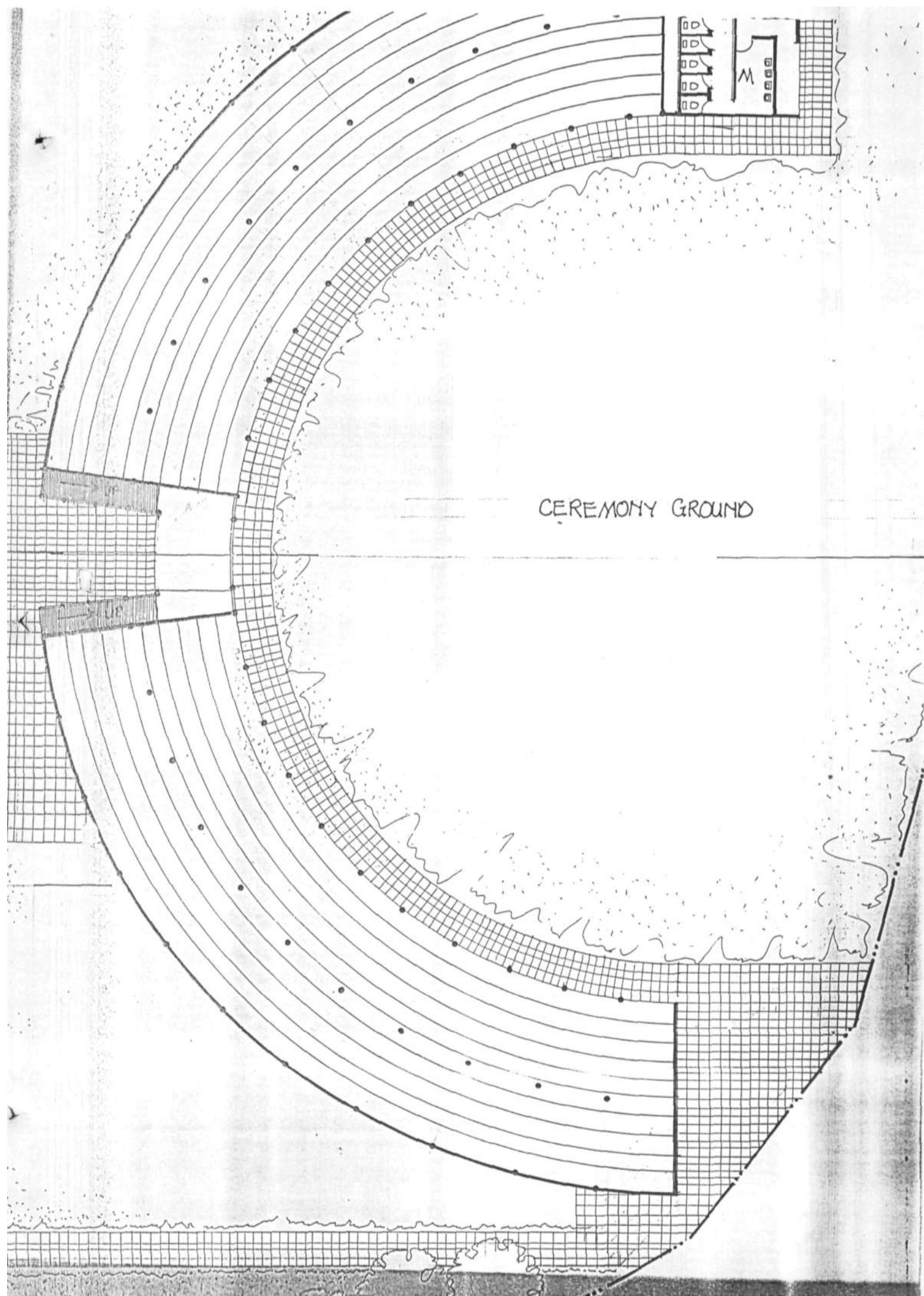
East

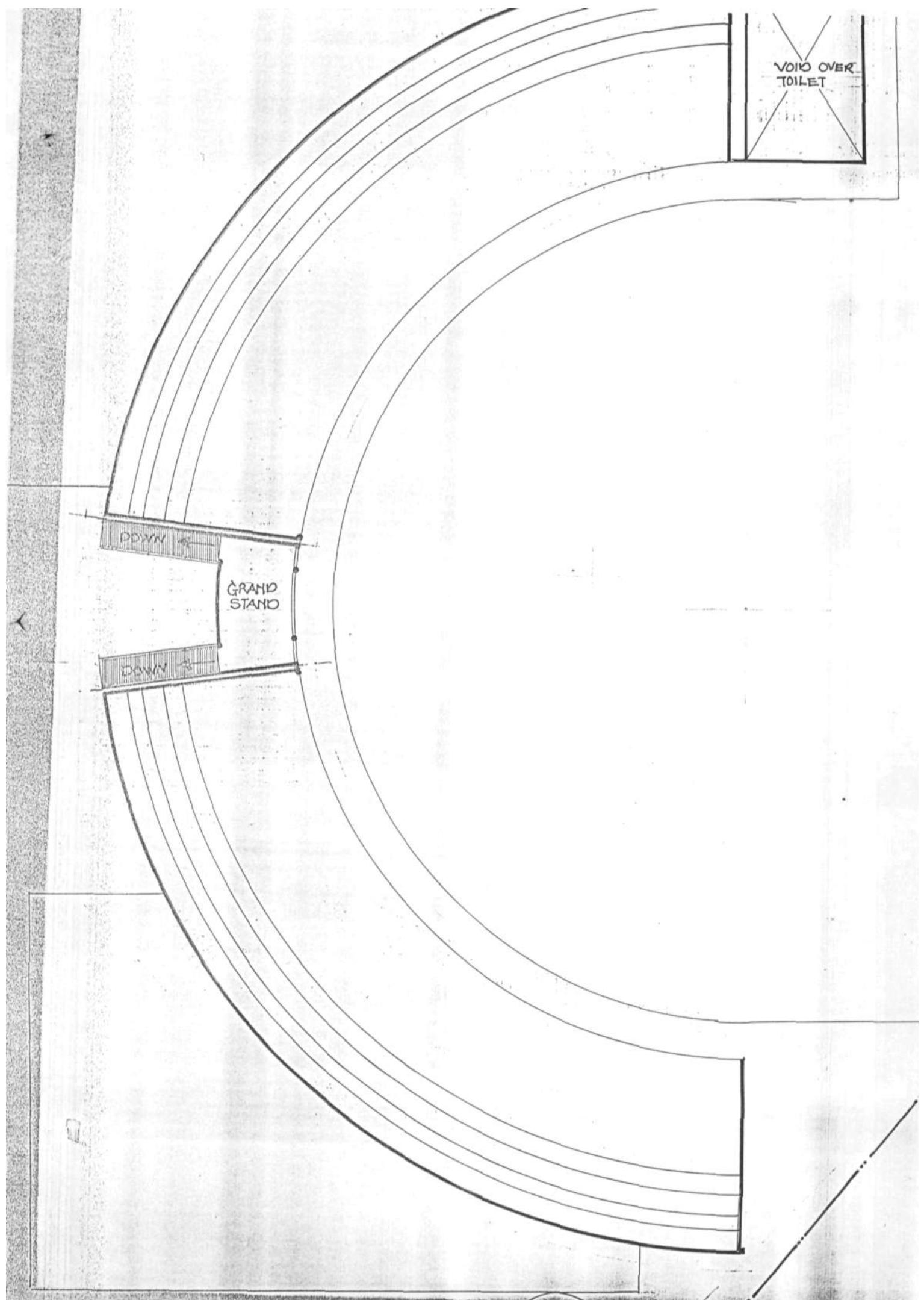
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West

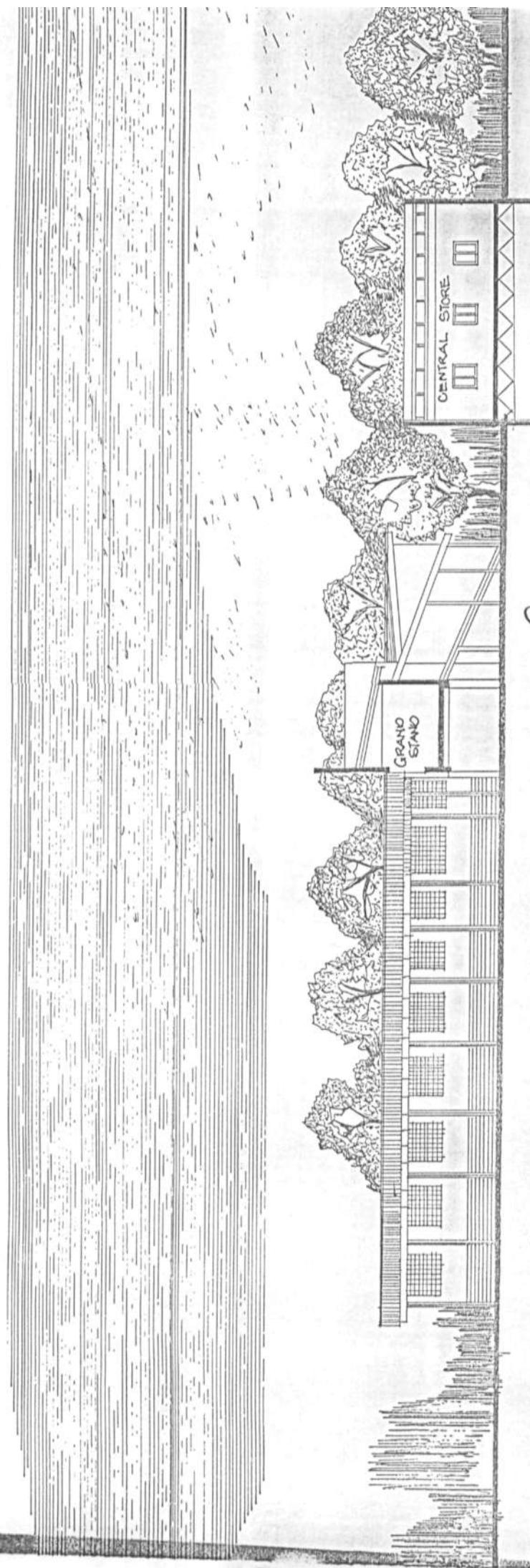






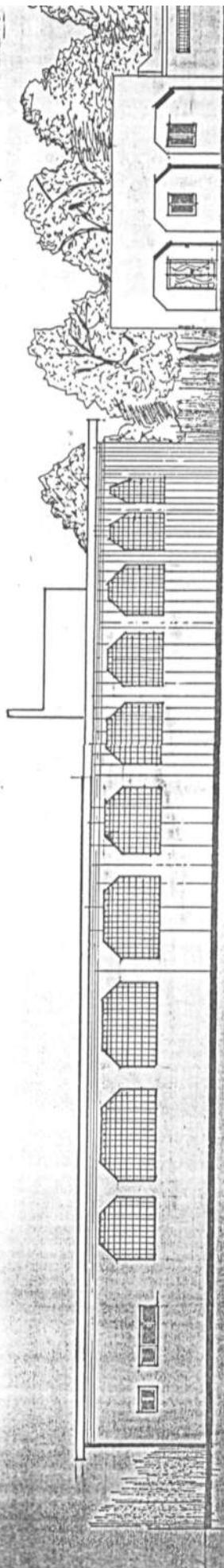
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SECTION 6-6. Ceremony (Chorus).

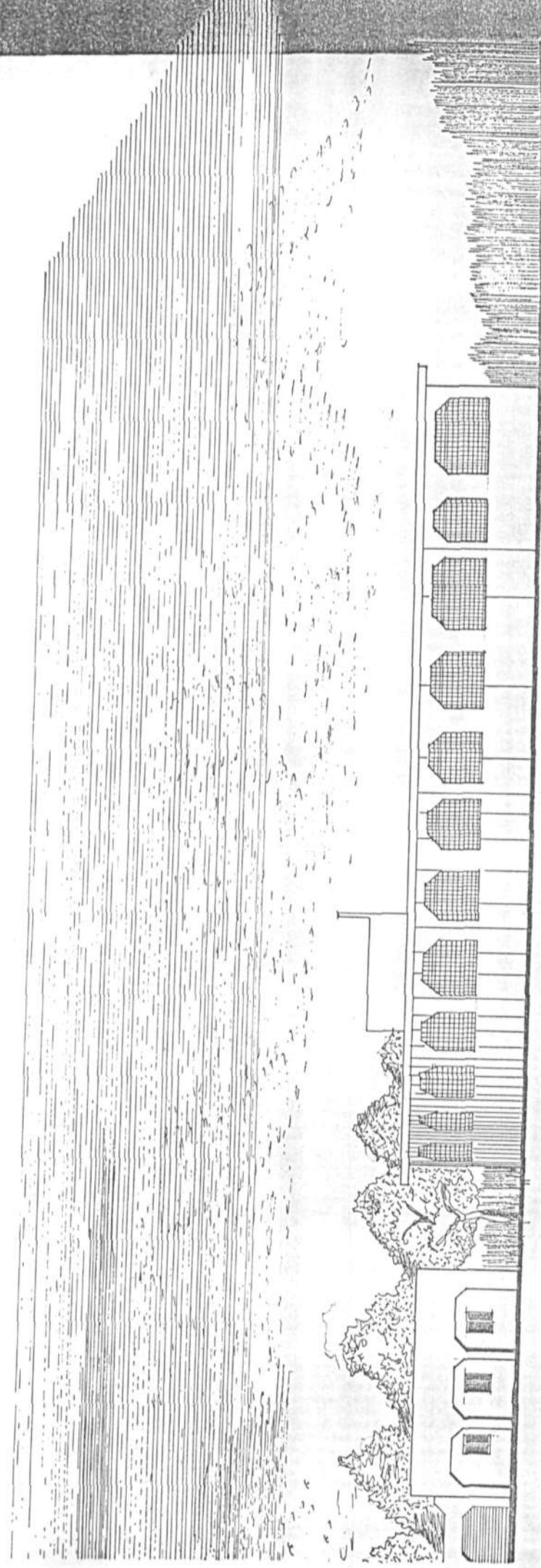


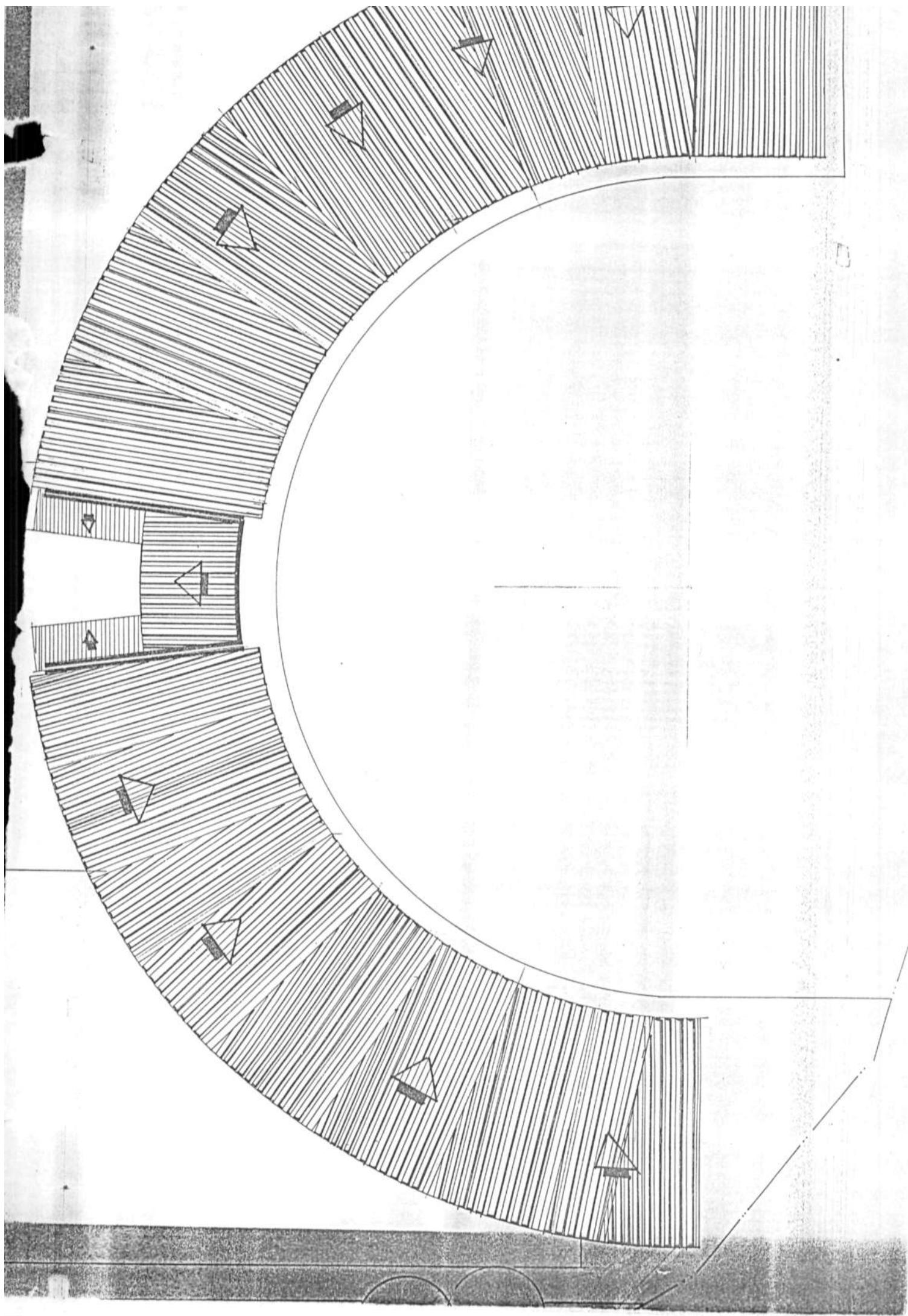
A REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

NORTH ELEVATION (Ceremony Ground)



South Elevation (Ceremony Ground)





ATTAH IGALA'S PALACE (MODEL)



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